NIDIDHYASANAM (CONTEMPLATION)

FROM APAROKSHA ANUBHUTI OF SRI ADI SANKARA



BASED ON TALKS BY

SWAMI GURUPARANANDA

PREFACE

After trials and tribulations of many lives (*Janmas),* it is only by the *Anugraham* of Iswara, that a *Sadhaka* (Spiritual aspirant) gets a human life; then an intense desire to seek *Moksham* (*Teevra Mumukshutwam*), and the learning of Sastra from a *Shrotriya, Brahma Nishta Guru*. By *Atma Kripa* (great Self effort), he acquires eligibility qualifications (*Sadhana Chathushtaya Sampatti*) and does the Sadhanas of *Sravanam* and *Mananam* for a length of time.

As result of this great effort he gets the supreme *Atma Jnanam* (Self Knowledge). Indeed now he should be able to experience total fulfilment or *Moksham* ("*Soka Nivritti* and *Ananda Prapti*"). Yet, the Sadhaka continues to experience "*Samsaram*" (sorrow).

Obstacles arise from himself, in the form of "*Vipareeta Bhavana*" (erroneous thoughts). The Sadhana of ***Nididhyasanam*** (Contemplation) is recommended to overcome this final obstacle to Moksham.

Sri Sankara Bhagawatpada, in his "***Aparoksha Anubhuti***", has devised "***Tri-panchanga Nididhyasanam***" (Contemplation

comprising of 15 parts or types). He took the names of 15 Sadhanas from Yoga Sastra) which are familiar to Vedanta Sadhakas. And he gave new Lakshanams for these Sadhanas, such that they become Nididhyasanam. Just as the *Sahasra Namavali* (thousand names of the one Iswara) gives an apparent variety to the devotee to choose a favourite name for worship; these 15 types of Nididhyasanam offer an apparent variety to the mind of the Nididhyasaka. Sri Sankara has also discussed the "***Sadhana Vighnani***" (obstacles to the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam).

Through his lucid discourses in Tamil, Pujya Swami Guruparananda had elaborated the text of "***Aparokasha Anubhuti***" in a methodical manner.

Based on these discourses, for own benefit as a student, I translated the "***Tripanchanga Nididhyasanam and Sadhana Vighnani***" portion of the talks to English in this book.

May Iswara bless that this book benefit Vedanta Sadhakas!

Dr. B.V. Subrahmanyam
Chennai, 30th May 2020

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INTRODUCTION

In the text titled **'Aparoksha Anubhuti'** (APA), **Sri Adi Sankara** Bhagawadpatha explains the Sadhana of **Nididhyasanam** (Contemplation), in 35 slokas (Sl.100 to 134).

Acquisition of Atma Jnanam

The word "Pramanam" means 'knowledge-giving-instrument'. When we use the Pramanam, we get "Prama" or "Jnanam" (knowledge). Thus, when we use the Pramanam namely "Upanishad", we get "Atma Jnanam" (Self knowledge or knowledge about "Atma" or Self). After getting this knowledge, our life should get transformed based on that knowledge. We should live in accordance with that knowledge.

Karna was seeking to know about his parentage. Upon getting the knowledge about whose son he was, he immediately got the benefit of that knowledge. After that, it was upto him either to keep that knowledge concealed or revealed. But, that knowledge was of use to him.

Obstacle to realizing Jnana Phalam

In our life, we get a new experience and knowledge. Yet, even after our getting this new knowledge, we experience an obstacle for this knowledge to fully manifest and give us the benefit.

Upanishad gives us a new knowledge, namely, Atma Jnanam (Self knowledge) that ***"I am Poornaha (I am full); that this world is Mithya, mere appearance; that we should not give any importance (or mukhyatwam) for this world; that I am alone the Absolute Reality or Truth"*****.**

All this we learnt from the Upanishad. What should happen immediately? Our life should get transformed in tune with this new knowledge. Yet in our experience we see the following.

Before our getting this knowledge, we were experiencing "Samsara" (Sorrow). And even after our getting this knowledge, we see that we are continuing to experience Samsara (Sorrow). Earlier we were ignorant, without this knowledge. We were Samsaris without the knowledge. And now after getting this knowledge also, we are continuing to

experience Samsara. Now, we are Samsaris with the knowledge. That is all the difference. Earlier, “We did not know, and we were sorrowful” and now “We know, and yet we experience sorrow”.

A beggar owned a small hut and lived therein. He then got the knowledge that 100 feet below his hut, there was a huge treasure. But he does not have the money to excavate the earth and retrieve the treasure. No one was ready to lend him the money for it. Even if he promises to return the money after getting the treasure, no one is willing to believe him. What is his state now? He now has the knowledge that 100 feet below, he has a treasure. Yet he continues to be a beggar, in the same manner as before.

So also, the Upanishadic knowledge is with us, but we are not able to get the benefit of that knowledge. So Sastra gives us an “Upaya” (Technique). Sastra need not give us any further knowledge, for we have already got that knowledge. But that knowledge has not yielded its result. It has not come into fruition (action).

There is an obstacle for that knowledge to come into action. Now, from whom is the

obstacle coming? If the obstacle is from someone else or some external agency we could do something about it. But the obstacle is from within the knower, the obstacle is in us, in our own mind.

There is a “Poorva pakshi” (opponent) in us. If the enemy is outside we can run away from him or do something about it or even destroy him. But the enemy is very much in us, in the form of “Vasana”, (“Vasana Roopam”, as imprint), in the form of previous “Samskaras”. Our character itself is our problem; our “Gunam” (nature) itself is our problem.

These obstacles are identified in Yoga Sastram as “Maanthyam” (dullness), “Vishaya Asakthi” (Attachment to Objects), “Rasa Aswadanam”, etc. Maanthyam means a dull state in us, whereby we are unable to get over the obstacles. It is a flaw (“dosham”) that comes from “Tamogunam”. Vishaya Asakthi means attachment to objects. Attachment to the Vishayas does not go away that easily. This dosham comes from “Rajogunam”. We also get obstacles (Rasa Aswadanam) due to “Satwa gunam”.

Thus problems come from Tamogunam, Rajogunam and later from Satwagunam. Therefore, in all possible manners we have to refine our mind.

NIDIDHYASANAM, the Upayam

After the Sadhanas of "Sravanam" and "Mananam", Sastra suggests the "Upaya" (Technique) or Sadhana (Practice) of Nididhyasanam (Contemplation), namely profound and repeated meditation, for Atma Jnanam (Self Knowledge) to become established and yield the Jnana Phalam.

The question arises as to whom (which person) this Sadhana of Nididhyasanam is advised. It is not for a person who has attended the first class of Vedanta. The essential qualification for a person to do Nididhyasanam, is that he should have Atma Jnanam. Only if Atma Jnanam is there, could the person do and benefit from the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam.

For example, in order to do Ph.D. in a subject, the eligibility qualification is that the person should first have a Master degree in that subject. Only if he has knowledge upto that level, could he benefit by going for Ph.D. So also, only a person with Atma Jnanam can

benefit by doing Nididhyasanam. Thus, only if Atma Jnanam, at least as "Paroksha Jnanam" (as heard from others) is there, could he do the sadhana of Nididhyasanam and benefit by it.

Here, in "Aparoksha Anubhuti", what Sri Sankara says is that for getting the "Phalam" or benefit of "Jeevan Mukti" or "Moksham" (Liberation), we should do some Sadhanas. If one does these Sadhanas, then Atma Jnanam would become "Jnana Nishta". That is, Atma Jnanam would get established and give its benefit or Phalam of Jeevan Mukti or Moksham.

If the Sadhanas are not done, the Jnanam would be there, but the Phalam or benefit would not be there. Nididhyasanam is a type of Dhyanam. After Atma Jnanam is acquired, Nididhyasanam is the Sadhana to be done for Jnanan Nishta or for making that Jnanam established.

Let us see how Sri Sankara explains this Nididhyasanam.

In "Yoga Sastra" (Yoga Sutras of Patanjali) some Sadhanas are stated, using some terms such as Yama, Niyama, etc., to denote them. These terms have a certain meaning in Yoga

Sastra. We can consider them to be technical terms.

For example, the word ‘duck’ refers to a kind of bird as per the meaning given in the dictionary. This is called the common or normal meaning. But if the same word ‘duck’ is used in the game of cricket, it denotes ‘zero runs’ (the egg of a duck). Thus, though the dictionary has a certain meaning, when used in specific context, words could have another meaning.

So also, Patanjali Maharshi has taken certain Sanskrit words to denote certain Sadhanas, and has given a certain Lakshanam (definition) to them. In Yoga Sastram those words has a specific meaning, which could be different from the meaning in literature.

When one studies Sanskritam, one will ask if one is using Vedanta Sanskritam or Natya Sanskritam or literature Sanskritam. Terms have different meaning in literature, Vedanta or Natya Sastra.

So also, Vedanta has a certain special meaning for the words. In earlier times, for a person to come to Vedanta, Yoga was compulsory. The reason is that, only after disciplining the mind and making it refined,

could Vedanta (Spirituality) be understood. “What is the role of Yoga in Vedanta?”. ”Where does Yoga come in Vedanta?”. Yoga preceeds (is practiced before) Vedanta. Why? In order to understand what the Upanishad is stating, the mind should be refined and for that refinement, Yoga is required.

Thus, Yoga was introduced to Vedanta students. So going through Yoga and upon refining ourselves, if we go into Upanishad, then we would understand Upanishad. Thus, in earlier times, those who have gone to Upanishad have already gone through Yoga Sastram.

After studying Yoga Sastram, as stated by Patanjali, as to how to train our body, how to discipline the mind, and after getting trained and refining himself, a person enters Vedanta Sastram and does “Sastra Vicharam” (Sravana and Mananam) and acquires Atma Jnanam. After obtaining Atma Jnanam, he has become a Jnani.

Earlier to this stage, he has performed several Sadhanas, such as “Karma Yogam”. Going out into the society and doing Seva (service) is another such Sadhana. There are

several such Sadhanas. He has done these Sadhanas well. As a result, he got humility and purity of mind ("Chitta Suddhi") and had come for Sastra Vicharam. Then he got Atma Jnanam.

At the present stage (having obtained Atma Jnanam), there is no need for him to do these previous Sadhanas any further. The earlier Sadhanas of Seva etc., are not necessary. Also he should not do them. His Sadhana now is to get established in the Jnanam that is with him now. Not only that. Performing those former Sadhanas would be an obstacle to him now. For example, if he were to engage himself in Seva (social service) now, he would not have the time for the Sadhana that is essential for him to get Jnana Nishta.

Take the example of the Sadhana namely Yatra (pilgrimage, visiting holy places). Some people go to Rishikesh by "Paada Yaatra". Some go from Rishikesh and cover the entire Himalayas. This Sadhana has to be done during the beginning stages. There are such Sadhanas which are to be performed by a spiritual aspirant, at a certain stage of his progress. But, these Sadhanas are not required to be done at

all stages. One should not say, ‘I will do it even when I become 90 year old’.

After doing any Sadhana at some stage and for a certain period, one has to progress to the next appropriate Sadhana. One who has gone to the stage of the next Sadhana, has to give up the previous Sadhana. Thus, Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra gives Sadhanas that are recommended to a Sadhaka before getting Jnanam.

Here Sri Sankara takes some terms which refer to certain Sadhanas given in Patanjali’s Yoga Sastra. (He takes those terms as the Nididhyasaka is familiar with those terms). But, he gives a different set of meaning or description to those Sadhanas, as hereafter explained.

Thus, for a Jnani who desires to get Jnana Nishta, the meaning for those Sadhanas (terms) is not what was given in the Patanjali’s Yoga sastra, but as explained by Sri Sankara.

If we see an example, we will understand this. For example, if we desire to get Punyam and if we wish that our Papam has to go, Sastra suggests several Sadhanas to us. One such Sadhana is to go to a temple and to do

"Pradakshinam" (circumambulation or going around) of the Lord. If we go for doing "Giri Pradakshinam" (**கிரிவலம்**/ Giri valam or circumambulation of a holy hill), we visualise that very hill to be a Sivalingam and do the Giri Pradakshinam. This Pradakshinam, Pada Yaatra (pilgrimage by foot), or circumambulating the "Sannidhi" (sanctum sanctorum) of Iswara gives us purity of the mind.

The "Nididhyasaka" has already done this Sadhanaa at an early stage of his spiritual journey. He then got the Jnanam (knowledge) that Bhagawan to whom the Pradakshinam is being done is all-pervading, that He is as everything in this world, that He is manifest as "Pancha bhutam" (five elements). Such is the knowledge that he got. After getting such a Jnanam (that Iswara pervades everything in this world), he need not go and do circumambulation of the idol of Bhagawan etc., any further.

For a person who has realized this knowledge, even his very walk is Pradakshinam. Thus, Pradakshinam is a Sadhana for a Sadhaka upto the stage when he is able to see Bhagawan only in the temple.

Upon getting the Jnanam and knowing that this entire cosmos is the “Swaroopa” (form) of Iswara, what is Pradakshinam for him? If he goes for a walk, that itself is Pradakshinam for him.

Sri Sankara says that for a Nididhyasaka, the Pradakshina is not going and circumambulating the temple or the Lord. The reason is that, he has already done the Sadhana of Pradakshinam and has got himself purified. After that stage, wherever he goes for a walk, it is Pradakshina; he has the “Bhavana” (attitude) that he is going around Iswara.

In this manner, taking the terms of some Sadhanas which are given for a Sadhaka (aspirant) initially, Sri Sankara gives a different definition to those terms and explains the Sadhanas that a Nididhyasaka should perform in order to get Jnana Nishta (to be established in Knowledge). He takes the words, such as Yama, Niyama and Maunam. For a Nididhyasaka, these Sadhanas are not what Patanjali has explained. Instead Sri Sankara explains them as applicable to the Nididhyasaka.

We may wonder, if it is alright that Sri Sankara should give a new definition to the names of the Sadhanas? We will notice that Patanjali Maharshi himself has done this, he had taken certain words from the dictionary and had given an extra meaning for those words in his Yoga sastra.

In a similar manner, Sri Sankara also takes words from the list of Sadhanas given by Patanjali and gives his own special meaning.

We have seen this from the example of "duck". The word duck has the meaning of a bird as per the dictionary. But, in the context of cricket the same word is given a special meaning and used. In the same manner, Sri Sankara took the words from Patanjali Yoga Sastra and gives a definition that is not found anywhere else.

Patanjali uses the word for “Yamaha” to mean the the Sadhana of disciplining of the senses. This is the meaning that Ajnanis (those who have not yet got Atma Jnanam) have to take. But for Nididhyasaka, Adi Sankara gives his own definition for “Yamaha”.

He gives a new definition for the Sadhana of Yamaha for the Nididhyasakas. So also, he

gives new meaning for Niyamaha, Maunam, etc.

Others have given such decriptions. They said, "Body is the temple of Iswara. Manam is the peacock vehicle (**மயில் வாகனம்**/ mayil vahanam) used by Bhagawan. Our voice is the temple bell (**கோவில் மணி ஓசை**)". People have sung in this manner. The meaning is not what is normally stated. It is different.

Nididhyasanam of 15 Parts

Thus, Sri Sankara is going to give 15 Sadhana Parts (Angas) for Nididhyasanam taking 15 terms which are often used in Yoga Sastra. Ajnani Sadhaka has to do the 15 Sadhanas as has been told in Yoga Sastra. But, for Jnani (Nididhyasaka), Sri Sankara gives different meaning for these 15 terms or Sadhanas.

In Sloka 100 Sri Sankara says that he is going to introduce the 15 types of Nididhyasa Sadhanas.

"Tri panchangaan yatho vakshye
purvoktasya hi labdaye
Taischa sarvaihi sadaa kaaryam
nididhyasanam eva tu" .. Sl.100

"I am going to explain 15 types of Sadhana, which are part of Nididhyasanam, which a Nididhyasaka has to do always, in order to attain Jnana Nishta"

For all these Sadhanas there is a certain meaning in Yoga sastram. Here, as given by Sri Sankara there is an entirely different meaning for these sadhanas. Such sadhanas have to be done by Jnani or Nididhyasaka.

From Sloka 100 Sri Sankara commenced descrbing the Sadhana of Nididhyasana. After Sravanam and Mananam, in order to get established in Jnanam, the Dhyanam or Sadhana that is to be done by a Sadhaka is Nididhyasana. Sri Sankara takes the names of certain Sadhanas as stated in Patanjali's Yoga Sastram, but gives different meaning or explanation for those Sadhanas. For those who are in the initial stages, the Sadhanas are as given in Yoga Sastram, but for Nididhyasaka Sri Sankar defines the Sadhana differently. A Nididhyasaka has to do Nididhyasanam with these 15 angams.

We are going to see how a Nididhyasaka should do Nididhyasanam. For example, a Nididhyasaka should not think that he is doing

a Pradakshinam only when he is going around Bhagawan in a temple. Whenever he is walking he should think that he is doing Pradakshinam. Prasadam is not just what is offered in the temple to Bhagawan and given. What all he eats, he considers as Prasadam.

So also, what is Yamaha, what is Niyamaha etc., all these Sri Sankara is going to explain.

What is the purpose for giving these 15 types of Sadhana? ***"Purva uktasya hi labdaye"***, for achieving the phalam of Moksham, which was told earlier.

We can explain in two ways. To make the Jnanam that was explained earlier to become firmly established (Jnana Nishtaa), or to get the phalam of the Moksham that was mentioned earlier. He says, "I am going to tell 15 angams of Nididhyasanam, for the sake of obtaining the phalam of the Moksham which was told earlier.

What should the Nididhyasaka do with these 15 angams or Sadhanas? In line 2, ***"taihi sarvaihi, Sadaa, Nididhyasanam eva tu karyam"*** = with these 15 angas Sadhaka has to always engage in the Dhyanam called Nididhyasanam. ***"eva tu karyam"*** = he should do Nididhyasanam only; he should not do anything else.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, states ***"Atma vaa are Drashtavyaha, Srotavyaha, manthavyaha, Nididhyaasitavyaha"***. "Atma should be known, one should hear about it, it should be reflected upon, and meditated upon". The word "**tavyaha**" denotes that it should be done with full commitment.

Why is it said 'tavyaha', compulsorily? A person who does the Sadhana, might do that and also something else along with that. That should not be, he must do the Sadhana with full commitment.

Only if the Sadhana is done with full commitment, would one benefit by that Sadhana. If you do it as a pastime, as a hobby you would not benefit.

A retired person was asked how he was spending his time and what his hobby was. He said it was Vedanta. At other times, he has other hobbies. Vedanta was also like another hobby for him.

But, Nididhyasanam should be done with full commitment, with these 15 angams. The next question we might ask, we have studied Sastra taking all the pains, is it not sufficient? Why should we take the trouble and do Nididhyasanam? Sri Sankara is going to explain

the 15 Sadhanas; also why they should be done; and what the need for Nididhyasanam is.

Need for Nididhyasanam

"Nityaabhyaasaadrute praaptihi
Na bhavet satchidaatmanaha
Tasmaat Brahma nididhyaaseth
Jignaasuhu sreyase chiram" ..Sl. 101

"Without constant practice, Atma, which is of the nature of Sat, Chit, and Anandam cannot be attained. Therefore, the Sadhaka should always do Nididhyasanam of Brahman for his own good."

If we do not do the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam, we will not attain what we are attempting to get. We cannot be that Sat -Chit -Ananda Swaroopa Atma.

Sri Sankara tells, "If you do not do Nididhyasanam constantly, you can't be as Sat Chit Ananda Atma. You cannot be as Asamsaari. You can't be as Jeevan mukta".

What you will do is that, you will give problems to yourself. As a result of it, you will give problems to others. You will distribute your sorrow. You will cause sorrow to yourself and give sorrow to others, when you are as

Samsaari. If you want to be as Mukta, you have to do this Nididhyasanam.

Without ***“nitya abhyaasaat”***, without continuous practice, if you do not practice the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam continuously, ***“praaptihi na bhavet”*** = attainment would not happen.

If you do not do the Sadhana (practice) always, you cannot attain, “Sat Chit Atmanaha”, that Poorna atma which is of the nature of Sat and Chit. You cannot stay put in the state that “I am Poornaha, I am full, a total Person”. You can only be as a Samsaari, as a Dukhi (Sorrowful person), if you are unable to practice the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam continuously.

The conclusion: “***Tasmat***” = therefore, “***Jijnaasuhu***” = One who has attained Jnanam and wishes to attain Jnana Nishta, “***sreyase***” = to attain Moksham, “***nididhyaaset***” = should do Nididhyasanam.

The next question is, for how long? Every one wants to know the time duration. How long should one do Nididhyasanam? The answer is given, “***chiram***”= adhika kaalam, for a long time.

One cannot stipulate the duration, it depends on the vasanas that are in you. If a person asks how many Idlis should I eat? One can't answer that question. It depends on the space in his stomach and his digestive ability. So also we can't tell the time required.

Thus before going to the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam, another sadhana, Patience is required. We should be patient. We should not feel, "I have been doing or a long time, and the result is not coming". We should be patient. Some keep complaining. But, without complaining (**புலம்பல்**), one has to be patient. Patiently, daily, for a long time, if we practice Nididhyasanam then only we can attain.

Thus Sri Sankara introduces the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam, with 15 angams. If we do this Sadhana of Nididhyasanam, we will get Jnana Nishtaa.

What does it mean? Whatever we have known, we would be as that. The reason why one who has Jnanam continues to be in the same manner as one who does not know, is due to obstacles to that Jnanam. We should not say that there is no difference between a Jnani and an Ajnani. The second one lacks the Jnanam itself.

For us (who have got Atma Jnanam), it is enough if the obstacle is removed. We have done the Sadhanas for the Jnanam, such as Sastra Vicharam. We only have to remove the obstacles. For that the Sadhana is being told.

List of 15 Angams of Nididhyasanam

In the next 2 Slokas, the 15 angams are listed, seriatum. Thereafter for each Sadhana Sri Sankara's Lakshanam, which is different from Patanjali's Lakshanam, is going to be told. These Lakshanams are applicable for a Jnani – Nididhyasaka.

***"yamohi niyamas tyaagaha
Maunam desascha kaalataha
Aasanam moola bandhascha
Deha saamyam cha drik stitihi" .. Sl.102***

***"Praana samyamanam chaiva
Pratyaahaarascha dhaaranaa
Atma dhyanam Samaadhischa
Proktanyangaani vai kramaat" .. Sl.103***

"These Sadhanas are Yamaha, Niyamaha, Tyaagaha, Maunam, Desahas, Kaalaha, Aasanam, Moola Bandhaha, Deha saamyam, Drik stitihi; Praana samyamanam, Pratyaahaaraha, Dhaaranaa, Atma dhyanam and Samaadhi"

15 Angams are being told. With these Nididhyansanam should be done. Some would be Angams (part) for Nididhyasanam. Some of these would not be Angam (part), they themselves would be Nididhyasanam. Some would be Nididhyasana Swaroopam itself. When we see them we will understand.

All these are selected by Sri Sankara himself. They would have a different meaning from the Yoga Sastram, the Nididhyasaka has to follow as per the meaning given by Sri Sankara only. We will see them in a series now.

1. Yamaha	2. Niyamaha
3. Tyagaha	4. Maunam
5. Desaha	6. Kalaha
7. Asanam	8. Moola Bandha
9. Deha Saamyam	10. Drikstitihi
11. Pranayamaha	12. Pratyaharaha
13. Dharana	14. Atma Dhyanam
15. Samadhihi	

"***Proktani angaani vai kramaat***" = in this manner, Sri Sankara has stated the Sadhanas. Nididhyasana has to be done in this manner.

These 15 terms have one set of meanings in the dictionary. In Yoga Sutra, they will have another set of meanings. But giving up both those two sets of meaning, what Sri Sankara

does is to define these Sadhanas for a Nididhyasaka.

We saw in case of one example. That is, we tell a person, "You should go and do Pradakshinam in temple". To a mature person we say, for you Pradakhsinam is not in the temple. Wherever you walk that is Pradakshinam for you. Then whenever you walk you must think of Bhagawan and walk. That is Pradakhinam. We give a new meaning for that word and use it as a different sadhana. This type of usage is known to us. Duck in cricket does not mean the bird, but zero score.

All these 15 Sadhanas are for a Nididhyasaka. Now Sri Sankara is going to explain each of them, from next slokam, seriatim.

I. Yamaha

“Sarvam brahmeti vijnaanaat
indriya graama samyamaha
Yamoyam iti samproktaha
abhyasaneeyo muhur muhuhu” ..Sl.104

"With the knowledge that - “All this is Brahman (Sarvam Brahma)”, disciplining the group of Indriyas, is said to be Yamaha. It should be practiced (by the Nididhyasaka) again and again"

The first of the 15 types of Nididhyasana is Yamaha. If we see the dictionary meaning, Yamaha means Control, Discipline, “Nivritti”, restraint, pulling and keeping, holding back, avoiding, removal, stopping, **கட்டுபாடு** (Kattupaadu), **விலகுதல்** (vilaguthal), what should not be done. But in Yoga Sutra, Patanjali Maharshi gave a totally different meaning for Yamaha.

In the word Yamaha, Patanjali has included 5 Sadhanas, (i) Ahimsa (Non-violence), (ii) Satyam (Not speaking untruth), (iii) Astheyam (Non-stealing), (iv) Brahma charyam (Celibacy, Non-indulgence of senses), & (v) Aparigrahaha (Non- accumulation).

All these put together is Yamaha. The 'tatparyam' (importance) of Yamaha is that “they should not be done”. Yamaha is a list of 5 "don'ts", what should not be done, what should be avoided. This is the meaning that Ajnani Sadhakas (those who have not yet got Atma Jnanam) have to take.

The importance is not in doing something, but in avoiding/ 'not doing' something. For a basic Sadhaka, in order to purify himself and to go to Moksha, Yamaha is the first sadhana. Patanjali included 5 sadhanas in that.

If one wishes to progress to Moksha, first Sadhana that one has to follow is "don't disturb any one". ***'himsaam na kuryaat',*** Don't cause himsa (hurt) to any one, "hurt never".

For some people disturbing others is a hobby. Some elders in the name of showing their affection to a child, would indeed be causing himsa to it. They would pinch and pull and the child would cry. It is a playful game for them. It is sadistic. He thinks that he is being playful. He would rub his face against the skin of the child. But indeed child is being tortured. The child's skin is soft, and this person would not have shaved for 4 days. He himself does not know that he is doing Himsa. Doing Himsa has become a secondary nature or hobby for us, without our being aware.

So Patanjali starts with the Sadhana of Ahimsaa. "Take the Vratam of not doing himsa to others". We should take a resolve, "Through thought (manaha); word (Vaak); and deed (Action, Kayaha), I will not disturb anyone, unnecessarily". If Himsa becomes necessary we could, that is a different matter. Unnecessarily, without need, we should not cause Kashtam (difficulty) to anyone.

Second Sadhana is "Satyam". Due to our habit and training, when we open our mouth,

only falsehood tends to come. To speak the truth one has difficulty. It seems that to speak the truth one has to think, but speaking untruth is coming naturally.

"I gave some work to a person. He forgot to do it. I asked him if he has done the work. He said that he has completed the task. Then immediately, he corrected himself, and apologized, saying, “Swamiji, by habit I said so. I have not yet done the task yet”.

Thus, untruth is coming naturally and habitually. Afterwards upon thinking only, the truth is coming. So Patanjali gives the next Sadhana of Satyam. This Sadhana of Satyam should be understood thus. "It is not that you speak the truth, but that you should avoid speaking the untruth".

The next Sadhana given by Patanjali is Asteyam, "not stealing others' objects, not stealing others' labour". You should not steal another person's objects. What it means is that "Don't get anything free; it is equivalent to stealing only". We should not steal another person’s wealth. If we get something, we should have given something in return for it. We should not get anything without putting our labour or effort.

Aparigrahaha (non-hoarding, not keeping more than necessary possessions) and Brahma charyam (non-indulgence in Sensory pleasures) are the other two Sadhanas forming part of the list of Sadhanas called Yamaha by Patanjali.

Now AS is going to give a different meaning for the Sadhana of Yamaha. The Sadhanas, as given by Patanjali are for people in the beginning stages. To a Nididhyasaka, who has done all Sadhanas and who has been speaking only the truth and has trained himself thus, there is no purpose in telling him "Don't speak untruth". He can't speak untruth at all! So to a Sadhaka who has progressed to a great extent, telling him to do this or not do this is without purpose.

In this sloka, the first type Sadhana Yamaha is explained. Sri Sankara's definition for Yamaha is "keeping away from Vishayas / sense objects" ('Vishayangalil irunthu vilaguthal' /**விஷயங்களில் இருந்து விலகுதல்**). ***"vishayebhyaha indriyanaam nivaaranam'*****,** 'keeping Indriyas away from Vishayas'.

Here Vishaya means objects which are sought for pleasure. The only purpose for which one approaches the object is for pleasure. Yamaha means being away from the objects which we seek just for the purpose of getting pleasure; keeping our Indriyas in a calm

manner; calmness of the Indriyas; "***Indriyanaam santhihi***", etc. Thus, "***vaak santhi***", "***chakshuh santhi***", keeping hands, legs, etc., in a calm manner, etc., is meant.

A Nididhyasaka has to keep his Indriyas calm and peaceful.

We will see the cases of three types of people, a "***Pamara***" (ordinary person), an Ajnani Sadhaka and a Nididhyasaka, and how they can calm their senses.

Generally, Indriyas such as eye, ears, mouth, body, etc., will be calm, when they are away from pleasure giving objects. They could also be calm due to other Karanams or reasons. One karanam could be, if the Indriyam has already experienced a pleasure at that time, the Indriyam would have lost its Sakthi and would be calm. The Indriyam having just lost its capacity to experience, will be calm for a short time.

We see a person sitting calmly, though there is a plate full of Laddus before him. The reason is that he has just finished eating 8 laddus. Having eaten 8 laddus, he is now calm, even though a plateful of laddus is before him. Now, we cannot come to the conclusion that he is having great sense control. His Indriyam has got tired, after eating 8 Laddus and he is calm

for a short while. After say 3 hours, he would be ready to eat the rest of the Laddus.

His Indriyams are calm at the moment, having become tired in Bhogam/ pleasure. If the tired feeling goes, the Indriyams would again become restless. This is one Karanam for a Pamara (normal person).

Another Karnam for calmness of Indriyas is Vairagyam (Dispassion). He has concluded that this sweet is not suited for my body, my health. Though he likes sweets, and though there is urge in him to take them, despite these, due to the Vairagyam or the thought that he should discipline himself, he wins over the urge to experience the pleasure. Due to such Vairagyam (Dispassion), he is keeping his Indriyam under control and it is calm.

This is our stage when we were Ajnani Sadhakas. What should an Ajnani Sadhaka do? He has to cultivate Vairagyam, and with the help of Vairagyam, he should keep the Indriyam under discipline and be calm.

Thus there are the two ways in which the Indriyas become calm. A Bhogi calms the Indriyams by eating or experiencing the pleasure and calming of the Indriyams would be for a short while. An Ajnani Sadhaka calms the Indriyams through Vairagya Vritti (Dispassion).

But, in what manner and how should a Nididhyasaka calm his Indriyas? Sri Sankara gives a special reason. The Nididhyasaka calms the indriyams through Atma Jnanam. ***“atma jnana hetunaa indriya santhihi Yamaha”.***

He should use Atma Jnanam as Hetu (reason) for calming of the Indriyas. When we do so, such Sadhana is Nididhyasanam. So for Nididhyasaka, the qualification is Atma Jnanam. Using Atma Jnanam for calming of the Indriyas is the Sadhana.

When Indriyas go towards pleasure giving objects, utilising Atma Jnanam, we have to calm the Indriyam. If Atma Jnanam is not able to calm the Indriyams, we should understand that what we are thinking is Atma Jnanam is not Atma Jnanam.

In this type of Nididhyasanam, we have to bring Atma Jnanam in our mind, and should calm the Indriyams. We have to repeatedly bring Atma Jnanam in the mind and practice to be with it. We have to be with that Jnanam and calm the Indriyams.

When a person returns very late to the house, his wife who is waiting for him at home will be living with a feeling of anger and anxiety for that entire duration. She will be with that

feeling of anger. Thus being with a feeling, is practicing. In our case, it is being with Atma Jnanam, being with that Vivekam.

Sri Sankara gives the Lakshanam. "Whenever our Indriyam, due to the flaw of habit, wishes to experience pleasures; whenever our mind or body seeks to destroy its health, at such time we (Nididhyasaka) should bring this Atma Jnanam to our mind and bring the Indriyam under our control and keep it calm".

What is that Atma Jnanam? He explains in the first line. "***sarvam brahma iti vijnaanaath***". Vijnanam means Visesha Jnanam. "***ena jnana hetunaa***", having this Jnanam as the Karanam, 'that everything is of Brahma swaroopam'. Everything, I (who is seeking pleasure) and the object towards which I desire to go, all this is one.

With such Jnanam, "Indriya graama samyamaha", disciplining the group of our 10 Indriyas (5 Karma Indriyas – vak, paani, paatham, upastha, paayu, and 5 Jnana Indriyas – chakshu, srothram, ghraanam, rasanam, twak). With the knowledge that "everything is Brahman", calming our 10 Indriyas.

Earlier, when we studied "Tatwa bodha", the Indriya discipline was called "damaha". At

that time, this Karanam of Atma Jnanam was not told. The reason is that at that time, we being an Ajnani Sadhaka did not yet know that “everything is Brahman”. So for Ajnani Sadhaka another Hetu (Karanam) namely Viveka backed Vairagyam (dispassion) was told.

“If you experience pleasures through Indriyams, your senses will become weak". Also taking the reasons of “anityatwam” (impermanence), “bandhakatwam“ (experience of pleasures binds and enslaves a person), & “dushpooratwam” (fulfillment cannot be obtained), he should cultivate his Vairagyam, and he should discipline the Indriyas.

Here, the Nididhyasaka does have such Vairagya Vritti (dispassion). But now, he should not take the Vairagya Vritti for the disciplining of the senses. This is because Vairagya Vritti sees Dosham (flaws) in everything. The Nididhyasaka has no sense of lack, he is Poornaha, he does not see the flaws, for him everything is Brahman.

So instead of the Vairagya Vritti, he takes Atma Jnana Vritti. And with that thought, he disciplines the Indriyas.

If Indriyas go towards a pleasure; if Indriyas tell, “I have to see this, then only I will be happy”, or, “I have to listen to this”, or “I

have to taste this for pleasure", immediately, the Nididhyasaka should bring in the thought that "Sarva Brahma"; Everything is brahman; That Brahman is Ananda Swaroopam, Poorna Swaroopam. Therefore, for Anandam I need not go to Vishayams or objects (or people or situations).

Thus, with the support of the Atma Jnanam, we should communicate with the Indriyam, and with that Jnanam, the Indriyam is calmed.

Thus what Sri Sankara refers to as Yamaha is indeed Damaha. But the Hetu for it is different. Here instead of disciplining of Indriyas, it is "Indriya Santhi", calming of the Indriyams.

A poet (Aswaghosha) described Buddha, when He was walking, as "***alola chakshuhu***". His eyes were "***alolam***", not vascillating. In some people, we will find disturbance, **பரபரப்பு**(paraparappu), **பதட்டம்** (padattam). There was no disturbance in his eyes. So also in his hands and legs there was no disturbance, as he was walking. The poet describes that his Indriyas were very calm.

The meaning is that with this Atma Jnanam, we should keep all our senses calm.

When we get angry, how would our senses be? They would be disturbed. Whatever comes to our hand, we would throw. The reason is that in anger all the senses overact, they are restless. With Atma Jnanam, our hands, legs, ears, eyes, all of these are calm.

With the Jnanam that **"*sarvam brahma iti vijnananat*", "*atma jnana hetuna*"**, the Nididhyasaka should do Indriya Santhihi, calming of the Indriyas.

Line 2 states, **"*yamaha ayam iti samproktaha*"**, this is what is said by me (Sri Sankara) to be Yamaha. **"*abyasaneeyaha muhur muhuhu*"**. It should be practiced (by the Nididhyasaka) **"*punah punaha*"**, again and again.

Our Indriyas pull us towards pleasure giving Vishyams. The Indriyas are like horses. The chariot is our body. Just as the horses pull the chariot, the Indriyas pull our body towards the Vishayas (pleasure giving objects). Wherever the horses get material to eat, there they will pull the chariot. At such times, with the help of this Atma Jnanam, again and again we have to calm the Indriyas.

When one calms the Indriyam, it is Ahimsa to himself and to others. He will not harm or disturb another person and he does not harm

himself. Moksham is not harming oneself and not harming another. This is the phalam of Nididhyasanam.

In this Sloka, the Sadhana of Yamaha for Nididhyasaka is told. (We saw that for a Sadhaka who is in the beginning stages, Yamaha means the 5 Sadhanas of Ahimsa, Satyam, Asteyam, Aparigrahaha and Brama charyam). But, for Nididhyasaka, Yamaha is to bring out Atma Jnanam whenever the Indriyam is attempting to go out for the sake of pleasure, and is with Chanchalam (disturbance), and calming of the Indriyam.

II. Niyamaha

The next type of Sadhana to be followed by Nididhyasaka is Niyamaha.

"Sajaateeya pravaahascha
vijaateeya tiraskrutihi
Niyamohi paraanandaha
niyamaat kriyate budhaihi" .. Sl.105

"Keeping a Sajaateeya (Atma sambanda) vritti (thought flow) (in the mind) and rejection of Vijateeya (Anatma sambanda) vritti (thought flow) is (the Sadhana of) Niyamaha, which gives greatest Ananda, and it has to be done by the wise (Nididhyasaka)"

The dictionary meaning for Niyamaha is a set of things which are to be done, the list of ‘do-s’. “You should do this”. For example, “Tapaha” should be done, Iswara has to be worshipped, etc. What should not be done, the list of ‘dont-s’, is Yamaha (which we have seen already). And what should be done, the list of ‘do-s’ is Niyamaha.

Patanjali has given a list of 5 Niyamas. They are (i) Saucham (Purity, Cleanliness), (ii) Santhosham (Contentment), (iii) Tapas (Austerity), (iv) Swadhyaya (Study of Sastra, Scriptural study), and (v) Iswara Pranidhanam (Worship of Iswara).

Patanjali starts with Saucham (internal and external purity). We must keep things clean and pure. Whether we like it or not, if we leave anything, it would become unclean or asuddham in course of time. It is called Murphy’s law or something. If you leave anything, it will fall to repair. It has to be working to be in proper condition. So we don’t have to add unclean things in our place. If we just keep quiet, it becomes dirty and clustered. Dust will settle etc. Saucham is to allocate time, effort, money, and materials necessary for it.

Then he goes on with Santhosham (Contentment), Tapas (Austerity), Sastra

Adhyanam (Study of Sastras), and Worship of Iswara.

Sri Sankara tells what is Niyamaha for a Jnani (Nididhyasaka).

After addressing the the Indriyas (under Yamaha), he now comes to mind. If we observe the mind, we find that thoughts (Vrittis) are formed in two ways. There are two sources for the thoughts which are formed in the mind. One source is “Vasanas”, the already existing impressions (imprints). Vasanas are imprinted in us from our past experiences. From these Vasanas, thoughts come, be they good ones or negative ones.

We can see this from our experience, during the student life. If we study for sometime and afterwards even if we are just quiet, thoughts of what we have studied would be coming in the mind. A manager thinks about an important matter. After thinking for a while, he gets tired and is just relaxing. At that time, a solution would strike in his mind. The reason is that at the time of thinking, he was tensed up as to the decision that he should take. Thereafter when he is relaxing, from that thinking a thought would emanate regarding the solution. Thus, one source for the thought formation is Vasana, our samskarams.

That is why it is advised that we should put good vasanas inside. If we record good things, good thoughts would be coming. If we keep good things in the house, when air blows, good and pure smells would come. If we keep dirty and impure things in the house, when air blows corresponding smells would come. The kind of smell that comes depends on what we have stored. Same is the case with the thoughts that emanate from Vasanas. The type of thought which emanates depends on the Vasanas.

The second source of the thought is our present effort. At the present moment, based on our effort the thought would come. We take effort, plan and think, thereby these second set of thoughts come. If the person takes a book or an idea and redirects his thinking, then correspondingly the second set of thought comes. He takes an idea and thinks. Based on his effort the new thoughts come.

Thus for our thought formation, even if we are not doing anything, thoughts come from the Vasanas. We can also remove the Vasana by effort and bring a new thought flow.

Here Sri Sankara divides the thoughts into two types, as Sajaateeya Vritti and Vijaateeya Vritti. (In Yoga Sastra also this type of division is made). Our thoughts are divided into these two types, Sajaateeyam and Vijaateeyam.

A Nididhyasaka should bring Atma Jnanam in the mind and should be thinking about it. He thinks of the Atma Lakshanam and Moksha Lakshanam as told in the Sastra. He gets a first thought 'Aham Asangaha', 'I do not have Sambandam with anything'. He thinks of this from Sastra. He gets a second thought 'Aham Akriyaha'. 'I am not one who does anything'. 'Aham Aboktha'. 'I am not one who experiences anything'. All these are Sajaateeya Vritti. Sajateeyam means "what are all related to Atma", "Atma Sambandha Vrittis" (**'ஆத்ம சம்பந்தமான எண்ணங்கள்'**).

Actually, 'Aham Akarta' and 'Aham Aboktha' are different Vrittis or thoughts. But they are not inimical to Atma Swaroopam. Sajaateeyam means they are of one type, they are of Atma type, same nature. They are different thoughts but have the same nature. 'Aham Asangha' is a different thought to 'Aham Poornaha', 'Aham Akrodaha', 'Aham Asariri'. All these are different thoughts, but they all go along with the Atma Jnanam.

If after the thought 'Aham Asangaha', we get the next thought as 'he is insulting me', or 'I should give him a blow after Dhyanam', this is Vijaateeya Vritti, a different set of thoughts. For it is 'Krodha Vritti', 'Dwaita Vritti'. 'I am different and he is different', 'he has done a

mistake, so I have to give him a punishment'. Or 'he is punishing me, I am this Sariram'.

Immediately after the thought 'Aham Poornaha' if we get the thought 'Aham Nirdhanana, (I have no wealth), or 'I have no house', or 'no one is concerned about me', if such thoughts come, then they are Vijaateeyam. Such thoughts have the opposite flow of thinking to our Atma Sambanda flow of thinking.

Sajaateeyam means thoughts having the same Artham (nature) of Atma Swaroopam. But there is difference in the thoughts or Vrittis. Just as Laddu, Gulab jamun, Jilebi, etc., all are different, but they are all sweets. They are Sajaateeyam. Their sweet nature is not changing. Vijateeyam are Pakoda, Savouries, etc. Vijaateeyam has the opposite nature.

Thoughts of the type, "Aham Alpaha, Aham Samsaari", etc., such Samsaari type thoughts are Vijaateeyam. What Sri Sanakra says is that these Vijaateeya thoughts or Vipareeta Bhaavana come from Samskaaram. We have already been thinking in such a manner for a very long time.

"I am useless", this is one type of thought. Another person will be thinking that he is overuseful, "I can do everything". Either inferior

or superior, either thinking that I can do everything or thinking that I cannot do anything. All these are Samsara type thoughts.

In Niyama what Sri Sankara says is that Nididhyasaka should take up with effort the Sajaateeya thought. When such Sajaateeya thoughts are there, if Vijaateeya thoughts come, Nididhyasaka should block them with the help of Sajaateeya thoughts. Removing Vijaateeya thoughts and being with Sajaateeya thoughts is Niyama.

Thinking of Atma swaroopam again and again in different ways is Sajaateeyam. While thinking thus, if Vijaateeya thoughts come, removing them also along with the Sajaateeya thoughts is the Sadhana of Niyamaha.

If I get Dukham due to a relationship, if a Dukham giving thought arises, taking a Sajaateeya thought that is appropriate for that situation (Aham Asangaha), and removing that Vijaateeya thought.

He states in Line 1, 'Sajaateeya Pravaahaha' = having thought flow of the nature of 'Atma Swaroopa' and 'Vijaateeya tiraskrutihi' = removing / arresting Vijaateeya thoughts and maintaining the flow of Sajaateeya thoughts is 'Niyamaha'= that is Niyama. Niyama means order. Here it means

same order of thinking, when disorder comes in the thinking removing it.

Whatever thoughts illuminate Atma Swaroopam or Atma Sambanda or Moksha Swaroopam, keeping such thoughts; and with the help of those thoughts removing thoughts which are of opposite nature. Removing the Vijaateeya thoughts that come from our Vasanas or Samskarams, and keeping the Sajateeya thoughts that come through our effort.

How long are we to do this? Till such Samskarams themselves come as Sajaateeyam we should do this Nididhyasanam. If we allow it naturally, only Atma Dhyanam should come to us. This is the culmination of Nididhyasanam. Nididhyasanam should be continued till such time when, if we allow our mind freely and without control, if it tells "Aham Brahma", "Aham Poornaha", then Nididhyasanam is completed as a Sadhana.

The real status of a person can be known when we allow him to be free. If we keep him under control, due to that control he will be different. When the school is over you will hear a loud noise. That is the Swabaavam of the children. Till then the school was peaceful, because the teacher was there. Upon the school

timing being over, one will hear a loud noise. The reason is that the children are relaxed.

When we are left relaxed, how we are that is our true nature. Thus, it is said that our true nature is that in which are, when we are not being supervised by another. When other people are observing us we are being conditioned. As others are seeing us, we comb or do our hair. We do certain other things. When no one else is seeing us, how we are, that is our Lakshanam. But at that time we will not be seeing ourselves. Our Laskshanam should come as Swabavam. Till it comes as Swabavam we should do this Nididhyasanam. So Sri Sankara says that till it becomes our Samskaram, we should do Nididhyasanam.

Rejecting (doing Tiraskaram of) the Vijaateeya Vritti that comes from Samskaram, we should keep the flow of Sajaateeya Vritti. This is Niyamaha. To encourage us in this Niyamam, he says it is Paraanandaha. This Niyamam gives us superior Anandam. The reason is that each of our feeling (**உணர்வு**) is our Vritti (**எண்ணம்**) only. This is also an important thing that we should know. Our feelings are a thought only. The feeling that I am Poornaha is a thought. If I feel that "Aham Alpaha", that is also a thought. In Sajaateeya Vritti we get the thought that I am full. There is only one truth in this world. “I am everything”,

and such thoughts. Such thoughts themselves give us Anandam.

Therefore, ***"budhaihi niyamaat kriyate"*** = Jnanis who wish to attain Jnana Nishta, they do this Sadhana regularly and continuously. There is no need to tell that Jnani should do this.

A school going child is to be told that it should study. But, to a Phd student, who is fully committed we need only to tell that you take a little rest. The reason is he has so much commitment. He will continue to study. So also, here it is said that this Sadhana is done by Jnanis regularly. It is not said ‘it has to be done’.

Sri Sankara says Niyama for Nididhyasaka is removal of ‘Vijaateeya Vrittis" that come from Samskaaram. If Samskaram gives good thoughts they need not be removed. If Vijaateeya thoughts come from Samskaaram naturally, removing them with effort, Nididhyasaka must keep Atma Sambandha, Moksha Sambandha thoughts in the mind.

There will be some thoughts which are neither Atma Jnanam nor Samsaaram. For example, a person asks what is this colour? We see it and say it is say green. This dialogue is 'Samam' for either a Jnani or an Ajnani. In the

Vyavahaaram (transaction) as to what the colour is, there is no connection with either Jnanam or Ajnanam. We say that these are neutral thoughts. There is no probem due to such neutral thoughts. When subjective (I, you, etc.) aspects come, there is Samsaaram. At that time Atma Sambandha, Moksha Sambanda thoughts should be brought through effort. This is the Sadhana of Niyama.

Next the third Sadhana is Tyagam.

III. Tyagaha

“tyaagaha prapancha roopasya
chidaatma avalokanaath
tyagohi mahathaam poojyaha
sadyo mokshamayo mathaha” .. Sl.106

"Giving up the value in worldly objects (Names and Forms), with the awareness that - “All this is Consciousness (Myself) is Tyaga. Tyaga is greatly glorified. It gives Moksha immediately to us"."

The third Sadhana is Tyagaha. This term is not stated in Yoga Sutra, but it is a general Sadhana. In order to purify his mind, a Sadhaka has to do the Sadhana of Tyagam.

The general meaning for Tyagaha is giving up or sacrifice. Suppose there is a very poor

person, he has nothing. If we tell him “You do Tyagam of everything", there is no point. What is there with him, for him to do Tyagam?

Whatever is with us and is useful to us; to which we have attachment, and whatever we desire, our giving it up to others is Tyagam.

Danam or sharing is different from Tyagam. Whatever is extra with us, upon seeing others’ poverty or seeing their need, our giving is Danam. People say Danam is beyond one’s own needs. (**தனக்கு மிஞ்சி தானம்**, thanakku minji daanam). Keeping for oneself what is required and giving the rest is Danam, sharing. In contrast, Tyagam is when we ourselves would be in need of it. We would be having value in it, yet we will be giving it.

That is why Tyagam is relative. If there is an object, we have value for that object and we desire that, giving up of that object is Tyagaha. If we have no attachment to that object and if we give it up, the feeling of having sacrificed would not come in our mind.

An object is with a person now. He has no attachment to it and he does not like it. When he gives it, he will not get the feeling at all that he has given it up. What is the reason? He was indeed searching for a person to dispose it off. Now he got some one to dispose it off and he

gave it away. So he will not get the feeling of having done Tyagam.

When Tyagam is done there is a peculiar, mixed feeling. In Tyagam, there is Sukham and also a sorrow. We desire an object, or a person. A part of our mind desires it. Another part of our mind, for the sake of others or whatever reason does Tyagam. There is a feeling of loss in us and there is also a feeling of gain in us. We should be having a feeling that we have lost the object, and at the same time, we should be having a feeling of happiness that we have given it. Both these feelings are there.

So due to Tyagam there is a Sukham and at the same time the feeling that we have lost the object. That loss is also experienced by the mind. This is a Sadhana. A Sadhaka even though he desires an object, he gives it up.

Now a days, there are food stuffs which are both sweet and hot. It will have both chillis and also sugar. Earlier, this was not available. Similar feeling should come as a result of Tyagam.

The reason is, I like it and I need it, yet for the sake of others I do Tyagam of it. This is a meaning known to us.

If we go to Sastra, there are some technical meanings for Tyaga. "Swadharma Tyagaha" = giving up of our duties, taking sanyasam, "Vidhivat Karma Tyagam", giving up of Karma as per scriptural rules.

For the ultimate Sanyasam, Tyagam is like a rehearsal. We have to give up everything finally. Before that, we practice giving up little by little. If we go into Sastram, giving up of our duties as per "Vidhi" is called Tyagam.

To an Ajnani one could advise, you do Tyagam of this or that. But what should a Jnani do Tyagam of? What is relevant? What is Tyagam for a Nididhyasaka?

We have on old scooter. If we get some money, we buy a new vehicle and give up the old one. Thus we take one object and give up another. That is Tyagam.

Now for Jnani (Nididhyasaka) what is Tyagam? What is the motive for Tyagam? Normal motive for Tyagam is for the sake of those whom we like, or for the sake of the country, or we have value for a thing, for its sake we do Tyagam.

Sri Sankara states: for a Jnani, Nididhyasaka, Tyagam is making this world itself non-existent. It is totally giving up of the

world. In other types of Tyagam, one is keeping some objects of the world and gives up some other objects.

What Jnani has to do Tyagam of (or give up), is the entire Prapancham (or world). The object of Tyagam for a Jnani is the entire world. In normal Tyagam, we retain something after giving up. Jnani is doing Tyagam of this entire world itself. That is, he is making this world non-existent.

In Tyagam what is happening is that an object that is with us is becoming non-existent with us. Jnani's object of Tyagam is this world.

How? "***Atma Jnana Hetunaa***". With the help of Atma Jnanam, Jnani is making this world as non-existent, giving up of the world from oneself. Here Jnani is making this world itself non-existent. How to make it non-existent?, by bringing Iswara into the world.

While explaining the first sloka of Isa Vasya Upanishad, Sri Sankara says "by the thought that this is Iswara, let this world be pervaded". "With the thought that this is Iswara, hide or cover the world". "***Vaasyam***" means hiding. (That is why cloth is called Vastram; what hides/covers (masks) the body is Vastram).

Thus we have to hide this world. How to mask this world? With what are we to cover this world? "***Iswara Drishtyaa***". By the thought that this is all Iswara, we should hide this world.

There is an elephant made of wood. When we are seeing the elephant, we forget that it is wood. With the thought that this is wood, we hide the elephant. When we see the Adhaaram, there is only one object wood. When we see the wood, the thought that it is elephant will go away.

So also, this world has to be masked. How? In this entire world there is one vastu only. That is Brahman. By Brahma Drishti, this world should be masked/hidden. This is the Tyagam of this world.

In line 1, "***Prapancha Roopasya Tyagam***" (giving up of Prapanch Roopam) is to be done by Nididhyasaka. How? "***Chidaatmatwa Avalokanaat***". Avalokanam means vision. Seeing with the Jnanam that this world is of Chaitanya swaroopam. This world is of the nature of arivu swaroopa maana Brahman **(அறிவு ஸ்வரூபமான ப்ரஹ்மன்).** (Intha ulagame arivu swaroopamaana brahmanaaga ullathu, **இந்த உலகமே அறிவு ஸ்வரூபமான ப்ரஹ்மனாக உள்ளது).**

With such a vision, with such a Jnanam, "***Prapancha Roopasya Tyaghah***", Tyagam of prapancha roopam, making this world as non existent.

Other types of Tyagam are ok for a Sadhaka. He has value and Moham in an object. And he does Tyagam of that object. But a Nididhyasaka, with the knowledge that this entire world is of the nature of Brahma swroopam, does Tyagam of this Prapancham itself.

In line 2 the glory of such Tyagam is told by Sri Sankara. "***Tyagaha hi mahataam pujyaha***". Such a Tyagam is Mahataam. It is welcomed by the Rishis. Or it is glorified. Jnanis praise such Tyagam.

And what is the phalam of such Tyagam. "***Sadyaha moksha mayaha yataha***". Why it is praised by Mahaatmas is because it gives Moksham immediately to us. Such Tyagam gives one Moksham immediately.

We have to give up this world itself. This is our final goal. Instead we are praying and begging to Bhagawan for this or that object of the world. "Do that task for me or this task for me", etc. And we do not know even to ask for big things. What would a beggar ask from us? He would not ask for 10000 Rs. At the

maximum he might ask for 10 or 20 Rs. More than that, he does not know to ask. So also we are asking for some "alpa" (petty, அல்பமான) objects of this world from Bhagawan.

But this Tyagam of giving up of the world itself is Moksha Mayaha, it is Moksha Swaroopam. As long as we are holding on to the world it is Dukham. When we give up this world it is Moksham for us. As this Tyagam establishes us in Moksham, this Tyagam is "***Mahataam Pujyaha***". Jnanis praise this. They think highly of this Tyagam.

Upanishad says "***Tyagena eke amritatwa maanasuhu***". "Some attained Amritatwam due to Tyagam". We think that by getting something in life, we have attained something. But it is by giving up only we achieve. The mental state of being able to give up everything is important. It does not mean that we have to physically give up everything and stand in the middle of the road. Its meaning is that at the mental state one should be prepared to give up.

We use something in life for Vyavaharam/ transaction. With the awareness/ knowledge that everything is Brahman alone, when we transfer the value that we have in the world to the Brahman, what we get is Tyagam. This is the third Sadhana.

Next the Fourth Sadhana.

IV. Maunam

"yasmat vacho nivarthanthe
Apraapya manasaa saha
Yan maunam yogibhir gamyam
tad bhaveth sarvadaa budhaha" .. Sl.107

"From which Mauna Swaroopa Brahman, both Speech (Sabdam) and Mind return being unable to reach; and which is the goal of Yogis, the wise (Nididhyasaka) always remains as That (Mauna Swaroopa Brahman)"

The Fourth Sadhana for the Nididhyasaka is Maunam. In Slokas 107, 108, & 109 Sri Sanakar speaks of "Maunam".

Maunam is not a term from Yoga sastra. It is a normal Sadhana only. We know the common meaning of Maunam as 'not speaking', 'being silent'. Maunam means one will not speak, it is a Sadhana. For those who are in the initial stages, Maunam is a Sadhana.

If a person has decided to follow "Mauna Vratam" on a particular day, he would not speak to any one on that day. But he will do all other types of action, he might also write and thus convey what he wants to communicate.

But from his mouth words will not come. He will not speak, but all other types of communication would be there. This is what we normally understand.

Our mouth is either eating or it is speaking. If we see the organs that Bhagawan has given to us, if use an organ for sometime, it will start paining. For example, we can't walk for a long time, we can't write for a long time. But the mouth does not get tired easily. God has created it so. However long one might speak, one does not complain that his mouth is paining. So also, another organ - the ear, however much it listens it does not feel pain. Of course if we listen to music for 8 hours at loud volume, it could pain. Bhagawan has also given the ability to the ears to listen for long.

Our speech is like that. So our Rishis said that if we leave the mouth as it is, it will become like the sound box. So they advised that by following Mauna Vratam our mouth must be discliplined. So Sadhakas follow Mauna Vratam or not speaking too much or not speaking unless it is necessary.

Maunam is a good Sadhana. It's first phalam is Ahimsa. When we follow Maunam our causing Himsa to others reduces. When we are young, we tend to cause harm to others with our hands and legs. But as we grow, we tend to

use our "Vak" (speech) to hurt others. At times, to hurt a person differently we choose silence is an instrument. But, generally, when we pursue Mauna vratam, our hurting others reduces. Also our Chintana (thinking process) functions better. We would think well.

Maunam is an important Sadhana to be followed by a Saadhaka. It is said "***Yogasya Prathama Dwaraha Vaang Nirodhaha***", "Disciplining of the speech is the first step to Yoga".

Next what is the Sadhana of "Maunam" to be followed by a Nididhyasaka? The Nididhyasaka has crossed all the Sadhanas and has come to the top most level. We cannot tell a student who is doing his Ph.d. in Mathematics, to practice the multiplication tables. We should not subject him to the silly tests. In the same manner we should not tell a Nididhyasaka who is very close to moksham to practice maunam for 6 hours. It would be like an insult to him.

Now when is Nididhyasaka in Maunam? Sri Sankara takes 3 slokas for this Sadhana alone. For other sadhanas he has devoted one slokam each only. About Maunam he speaks more, in 3 slokas.

Sri Sankara gives 2 meanings for Maunam. In this Sl. 107, he gives one meaning for Maunam. In the next 2 Slokas (108 & 109), he gives the other meaning.

In this Sloka, he gives the meaning Maunam is Brahman itself. He gives the name of Brahman for Maunam. The Maunam to be practiced by Nididhyasaka is Brahman.

Who has given this meaning? It is in Mandukya Upanishad. "Amaatra Swaroopam Brahma". "Maatra Swaroopam" is Saguna Brahma. Dividing Omkaram as 4 maathraas, the first 3 maathraas being "a"kaaram, "u"kaaram and "ma"kaaram, it is said there that the fourth "amaatra" or silence is Brahman.

Taking that artham here what Sri Sankara tells us that Brahman's Swroopam is Mauna Swaroopam. Brahman is as Mauna Roopam. What is the Karanam for that? One reason is Brahman cannot speak. Brahman cannot open its mouth and speak. Karanam? It has no avayavams. We are able to speak, for we have such an organ/limb/avayavam. "nir-avayavatwaat", as it has no avayavam Brahman cannot speak.

Further, other than Brahman there is no other entity. So, who can speak to whom? If

Brahman speaks there is no other entity to listen. It alone is.

If we are alone at home, with whom will we speak. Brahman has no mouth or ear. So Brahman cannot create Sabdam. Another thing is when we follow Mauna Vratam, we do not create Sabdam. Also as we are not speaking, others will not also come to us and speak. This is a big advantage. Others think that we are in Mauna Vratam and avoid speaking to us.

We see Maunam in two angles here. One is our creating Sabdam and the other is our receving Sadbam. Either we produce sound or the produced sound hits us. From Brahman Sabdam would not come; and Sabdam cannot reach/hit the Brahman. Thus silence is of two types. One is, "sound should not come from us" and the other is, "sound should not come to us".

If we go to a dense forest sound would not come to us. A Swamiji writes about this. He went to a forest. The extent of silence he experienced was such that the only big noise he heard was his own heart beat.

So if a person wants to be in silence, he needs two silences. He should not create sound and to him sound should not come. He should not hear sound and he should not create sound.

If we have to attain complete silence, if we want to go to total silence, as long as we are in this Prapancham it is practically impossible. It is not possible at all, some noise or other will always be there. They have invented the loud speaker, wherever you go that sound will be there. Therefore wherever you go, even far away from the city, even if we do not produce, sound would come and affect us.

So what is to be done to go in for full silence? Sri Sankara says if you are as Brahman, you have attained total silence. Karanam? Brahman is Mauna Swaroopam. If you are as that Mauna swaroopa Brahman, you have attained the state of Maunam. When you have come away from the status of Brahman to the status of Jiva, then either you produce sound, or the sound produced would come to you. So what is the Maunam to be practiced by Nididhyasaka? It is being as Brahman.

In the Vritti 'aham brahmaasmi', the person being as Brahma Swaroopam is Maunam. If he comes to the state of Jiva, he cannot be in full Maunam. The Maunam to be practiced by Jnani is 'I am Mauna Swaroopa Brahman'. When he is thus, even though Sabdam comes from his mouth, even if Sabdam falls into his ears, he has a feeling or he is in the state , 'I am not creating any Sabdam, I am not listening to any Sabdam'.

There is story for this. Vyasa had a full meal. Then standing on the bank of Yamuna river, he said, "If it is true that I did Upavasam, let the water part and give me the way". And the water gave him the way. The meaning is that he did not have the Abhimanam that he ate. He was as Brahman and gave food to that body. He did not engage in the act with attachment. Thus though he did so at the body level, he did not do that act.

Thus being in the state that I am Brahmam, even if we speak it is Mauna Vratam only. Thus Nididhyasaka is not in Mauna Vratam at a specific time. He is in Maunam at all times. As far as he is concerned, he is not creating any Sabdam, and no Sabdam is coming to him.

From that Brahman Sabdam will not come. And Sabdam will not reach Brahman. '***yato vacho nivartante***'. Brahman from whom speech returned. Sabdam will not show Brahman and will not affect Brahman. And from Brahman Sabdam is not formed. Being as such Mauna swaroopa Brahman is Maunam. ***'yogibhihi gamyam maunam'*** . The goal to be attained by Sadhakas is Brahman. ***'tat bhavet budhaha' 'I being as that brahman'***. Being with the Jnanam "aham brahmasmi", keeping oneself as the Brahman,

is Maunam. Keeping oneself as Jiva is **‘amaunam’**.

This is the meaning of calling Sri Dakshina Murthy as ‘Mauna Guru’, calling him Mauna Swaroopam means Brahman is Amaatraa swaroopam. That is why it is said that Dakshina Murthy did not speak.

So for Nididhyasaka, Maunam is being such Brahman, being in Brahma Bhaavam. That Brahma Bhaavam is Mauna Swaroopam. This is one meaning that is told in this Sloka.

When one is in the thought ‘I am Mauna Roopa Brahman’, whether my mouth speaks or not, whether I listen to Sabdam or not, I am as Mauni. I have not produced sound nor have I received sound.

Yasmaat vaachaha nivarthate = from that Brahman from whom our words have returned.

We wish to explain Brahman through words. This Sabdam without reaching Brahman has returned. Our sound did not affect Brahman.

Apraapya manasaa saha = the thought also does not capture Brahman directly. Along

with the mind, the words are unable to explain the Brahman and return.

Certain things though we are unable to explain by words we can understand by the mind. But even by mind we are unable to understand and capture Brahman.

Yat maunam = here for Brahman the name given by Sri Sankara is Maunam,

Yogibhihi gamyam = The goal to be attained by Sadhakas is Brahman. Jnanis who have disciplined the mind can attain it. By disciplining themselves through Yoga, and by attaining Atma Jnanam they could attain this Maunam.

Such Mauna Roopa Brahman, ***tat bhavet sarvathaa budhaha*** **=** this Nididhyasaka, Jnani, who is in Jnana Nishtaa, "he should ever be that Brahman", he is ever Mauni.

Being as such Mauna Swaroopa Brahman is Maunam. ‘I being as that Brahman’. Being with the Jnanam "Aham Brahmasmi", keeping oneself as Brahman, is Maunam. Keeping oneself as Jiva is ‘amaunam’.

A Nididhyasaka should not be in Maunam/ Mauna Vratam, one day in a week or something like that. The reason is, he is ever-Mauni.

If a person says that he is in Maunam on a particular day, it means that on other days he is not a Mauni, that he will speak on other days. But Jnani is ever in maunam. "I a not following Maunam on a particular day alone. I am ever Mauni. As I am Mauna Swaroopa Brahman. So Nididhyasaka’s Maunam is Mauna Swaroopa-maaha, Brahmanaaha iruththal. (**மௌன ஸ்வரூபமாக ப்ரஹ்மனாக இருத்தல்**).

This is one meaning. For him, being in Mauna Vratam in a specified time is not the Sadhana. The Gamyam (goal) that is to be attained by Yogis is being as that Brahman, being as Maunam. For a Nididhyasaka, he being Brahman is said to be the Sadhana of Maunam.

In the next 2 slokas, another meaning is given for the Sadhana of Maunam.

Maunam (contd)

"vaacho yasmaath nivarthanthe
tad vakthum kena sakyathe
prapancho yadi vakthavyaha
sopi sabda vivarjithaha" .. Sl.108

"ithi vaa tad bhaven maunam
sathaam sahaja sanjnitham
giraa maunam thu baalaanaam
prayuktham brahma vaadibhihi" ..Sl.109

"Who can speak and explain the Brahman, from whom vak (speech) returns being unable to describe it? If instead one wishes to speak about the world, that too is beyond sound (description)"

"Thus (understanding that one cannot explain either the Brahman, or the world), the state that Jnani gets naturally is Maunam. For Jnanis, it is the natural state. But for the sadhakas who are in the early stages, not speaking is Maunam, as advised by Jnanis"

This is the second Sadhana Maunam to be practiced by Nididhyasaka. The Nididhyasaka thinks thus. Sri Sanakar describes his thought here.

Nididhyasaka sees this world. He divides all the "***Tatwams***" (entities) which are in this world as two, Atma and Anatma (as we saw in the Bhagawad Gita). One is Brahman, and the other is Prapancham. Prapancham is there and as Adhaaram for it Brahman is there. There is no other third entity. All entities can be categorised under these two. Our /every one's Atma is Brahman, all bodies come under the Prapancham. Thus everything is divided as Brahman and world. All indestructibles come under Brahman and all destructibles come under the Prapancham.

Nididhyasaka thinks, "Can I describe this Brahman by speech, with my mouth/ words? He then understands that he cannot describe Brahman by his speech/ words. It is not an entity that can be described through vaak (words). So he concludes there is no use in speaking about Brahman, as it is indescribable through words.

Next what is left is the Prapancham/ world. So it might appear that we can talk about the Prapancham. Some people would wish to talk about some topic. There are so many topics in this world. Now Nididhyasaka thinks, if he can describe this world? He then gets a Jnanam that he can't describe the world also correctly. "I can’t say that Prapancham has such and such vyavastha".

If we go on questioning even a scientist repeatedly, he can answer perhaps 5 or 6 questions. Then, there comes a point where he has to say that he does not know. "I don’t know beyond this, it is so’".

In Vedanta we have the Karma theory. Some people ask about the Karma theory. We can tell them about the past Janma, etc. if they continue the questioning beyond a stage we have to say it is ‘anirvachaneeyam’ (indescribable). It means, "don’t ask questions beyond this. We can tell this much only".

Whether the Karma theory or any other theory, with logic we can go only upto a certain level. If we go beyond this with the brain that we have, it can stop with wonder only and there is nothing to describe. There is no answer to the question ‘Why is it so?’. World can be explained only upto a certain level. Beyond that it can't be explained clearly.

This Nididhyasaka knows that he can't explain and describe the Prapancham fully. "I can't describe and explain the Brahmam also clearly". So he wonders, "Why should I speak. I can't speak about Brahman and make others understand fully. I can't speak about the Prapancham also and make others understand fully. If so, why should I speak? "

It seems there was a Swamiji who used to be in Maunam. Some people forced him to come and speak to an audience. He asked them, "Do you know what I am going to speak". They said they do not know. He said, "What is the use of talking to people who do not know what it is". Again he was forced to come and address. Again he asked, "Do you know what I am going to speak?" The audience was more prepared this time. The audience said, "We know". He said, "Why should I speak to those who know" and left. For the third time, the Swamiji was brought and requested to speak. He asked the same question again. This

time cleverly, half the audience said that they know and half the audience said that they did not know. He said, "Those who know, explain to those who do not know" and left saying, "I have nothing to speak"'

Nididhyasaka has nothing to speak about. Karanam is that one cannot speak about Brahman, which one does not know. One cannot speak about the world as well. So, what is one to speak about? In the mind of Jnani, a Jnanam comes. "I cannot speak about Brahman and make one understand. I can't speak about the world and also make others understand. Therefore there is nothing for me to speak about. There are only 2 entities, Brahman and the world. I can't talk about both these.

As a result of this Jnanam, he gets an effortless silence in him. As a result of this Jnanam he gets calmness in his mind. This is a subtle point. If we see in life, many times we will be arguing. What is the reason? The reason for our arguing is an expectation in our mind that we can speak, explain and make others understand. Both the people have this expectation. But there is none to listen. Both the persons would be speaking. Both have the expectation that I will speak about this Anatma vishayam (subject matter) and make the other person understand. The other person also thinks in the same manner.

Both are thinking that by ‘my speech I can make you understand. I will be able to explain'. As both are thinking in the same manner, there is argument there. When does argument stop? When one of them becomes a Jnani. One gets a Jnanam, "There is no use in talking with this person". When he undersands that whatever he speaks will not be understood, then he stops speaking. And when he stops speaking the other person also stops speaking.

When two people are speaking, when one gets the awareness that there is no use in my speaking to this person, then a silence occurs in this person. "Let me not speak. What I speak is not understood". If one requests, "Please speak, then one could speak. Till asked to speak, one gets a silence". That is said to be Maunam.

Maunam is when we know that "in this world, we can not speak, explain, and make any one understand any vishayam". This Jnani has understood this. Any Vishayam, whether it is Brahman or Laukika Vishayam, whether Sathya Vishayam or Mithya Vishayam, he thinks, "I can not speak and and make others understand". As soon as he understands this, in Jnani’s mind there comes a silence.

Nididhyasaka cannot argue. Argument comes because of the reason that this Jnanam

is not there. "I can not speak, explain, and make him understand". "When one understands that this Sabdam does not have this Sakthi, we should remove the thought that I will speak and make them understand. When such a thought goes, the nature that results is silence.

Sri Sankara says that this should become Swabavam or nature for a Nididhyasaka. The reason is this Jnanam, "I can't explain the real/truth and I can't explain the unreal".

If so what the purpose of Guru - Sishya Paramaparaa? If all the Gurus think like this and keep quiet, how will Jnanam be transferred? Jnanam is transferred through Samvaadam. Sishya comes and asks, "I am thirsting for knowledge. What you have understood, please try to pass on to me". It is like this. We can give an object in the hands of another person. Or at times, we throw the object and others can catch it. In the same manner, the Guru throws up the knowledge about Brahman. The intelligent Sishya catches it. That is all. Knowledge can't be given into another's hands, nor can it be fed into another’s ear.

In the Guru’s mind Jnanam is there. That Jnanam is Sushmam /subtle. Guru converts it in a gross form as sound (Sabdam) outside. Sishya receives that Sabdam in a gross manner

and converts it as subtle inside his mind. Betwen Guru’s Jnanam and Sishya's Jnanam sound comes in between and goes. It is always with gaps. If the knowledge is 'caught' it is ok, if not it is ok.

This is like cricket catch, it is very rare. One has to dive and catch with difficulty. If it is caught it is ok. Guru thinks, "If a suitable person comes and asks then I can open my mouth and speak". Even if it is spoken, one would not know if it is understood or not. So he thinks both Brahman and Prapancham are beyond speech. The calmness that comes in his mind due to this understanding is called Maunam.

So the Lakshanam given here by Sri Sankara for Maunam is this Jnanam. It is the feeling that comes effortlessly that there is no need to speak on account of this Jnanam, "Neither Brahman nor Prapancham can be explained through words", is Maunam. The urge to speak is ever in us. There is a pressing urge inside us to speak something. He for whom such an urge is arrested Maunam.

This urge to speak should become arrested in us. For some people if they do not speak about a new topic they feel that their head would burst. The reason is that there is such an urge in their mind. To keep a secret in mind

one requires a certain maturity. Or else we should not listen to any secret from anybody. If any one asks us can I tell you a secret, if our mind is not having the maturity to keep the secret, we should tell them, "dont tell me the secret". If a new secret goes into us, we should have the maturity to keep the secret. Or else we should not listen to any secret from anyone. If any one asks us if they could reveal a secret to us, if our mind is somewhat calm, we should tell them, please don't tell me the secret. The reason is that if a secret goes in, we need maturity to keep it. Many will not have the maturity. They would want to tell someone or the other. At least they would like to dig a hole and tell the secret and cover it up. Some people do so. They dig a hole in the ground, they speak the secret into that hole and cover it up. The reason is that the urge is there to such an extent.

When such an urge ceases because of the knowledge, "By speaking I cannot explain to any body". When we understand this, the peace and calmness that come in our mind, is called Maunam by Sri Sankara.

In line 1, ***"vacho yasmaat nivartante tad vaktum kena sakyate".*** This is the thinking of Nididhyasaka. The Nididhyasaka or Jnani thinks thus. ***'vacho yasmaat nivartante-*** such Brahman from whom vak

(speech) returns, that Brahman which cannot be directly described by speech, '***tad vaktum kena sakyate'*** who can speak and explain such a Brahman ? He knows that "by speaking I cannot explain Brahman". "So there is no Vishayam about Brahman for me to speak".

Some people if they know something about Brahman, they would like to go to others and explan that Brahman. It will be better if they become Brahma Jnani. So they would want to explain the Tatwam about Brahman. But, Nididhyasaka thinks I cannot speak and explain that Brahman.

Here is an instance that happened in the life of the Sage Sadasiva Brahmendra. He studied Sastram well from his Guru. He used to call all learned Pundits and to establish Adwaita he used to argue and make others dumb founded. Someone went and told his Guru, "You taught Sastram to your Sishya, he is now doing Vadam (arguing) with every one and is winning over every one. The Guru told Sadasiva Brahmendra, I told you Sastram for the sake of giving you Jnanam. You are making every one's speech silent, when will you make your voice silent? It seems that was the last day when Sadasiva Brahmendra spoke. It is said that he did not speak after that at all. The meaning is that then he understood.

He was thinking, "Every one has a wrong notion about Brahman. I will explain Brahman to every one". He finally understood "Who ever can explain this Brahman"? Upon understanding this, the urge to speak about the Sastram went away.

Some people cease talking about the world and start talking about the Sastram. This thought that one should talk about Sastram should also go. This is the first line.

Alright, "we are unable to explain Brahman, let us explain the world". This is the second line ***'prapancho yadi vaktavyaha',*** "shall we speak about Anatma Vishayam and can we make others understand? ***'saha api sabda vivarjitaha'***. The world, laws of the world and the Mithya Prapancham are ***'sabda vivarjitha'.*** They cannot be explained through words/speech. The world cannot be explained through Sabdam. Brahman also cannot be explained through Sabdam.

The word "Anirvachaneeyam" is common and applies both to Brahman and Prapancham. Brahman is Anirvachaneeyam because it is Poornam or full, Jagat is Anirvachaneeyam because it is Sunyam/ Mithya. It is not there, therefore it cannot be explained. Brahman is full, therefore you cannot talk about it.

The urge to speak is ever in us. When we think of what to speak, one is Brahman and the other is this world which is Abrahman. If we wish to speak about Brahman, we cannot speak about it and make others understand. If we wish to speak about the world it is also Anirvachaneeyam.

On getting this knowledge, as a result of this knowledge, the calmness that naturally comes in our mind, the freedom that we get from the urge to speak is Maunam. The reason for our speaking is the feeling that we can speak and achieve something. When we realise that by speaking we cannot achieve anything, the freedom that we get from the urge to speak Maunam.

That is explained, ***'iti vaa tad bhavet maunam'***. that is, understanding that we cannot explain the Brahman, and understanding that we cannot explain the world, the state that Jnanis get naturally is Maunam.

Thus there are two Maunams, one is Brahman. The second Maunam is the calmness that we get in our mind on account of such a knoweldge.

Thus, this is Jnani's thinking. In earlier Sadhana, we were told Maunam means

Brahman. Now Maunam is given a second meaning ***'iti vaa tad bhavet maunam'.*** By such thinking whatever calmness or fullness comes in the mind, that is Maunam. This Jnanam itself is Maunam.

The first Sadhana of Maunam is Brahman. The second is that due to this Jnanam, the urge to speak when it stops in the mind of the Jnani, that is Maunam.

The urge to speak will not stop that easily. The reason is we are not able to be in solitude. Why do we find it difficult to be in solitude? If we think and find out, it is because of our urge to speak. It is the urge to speak that is making us not to be inside the four walls. We have to speak and we require another's ears to listen. Or I have to listen to some one else. I can't explain Brahman, I can't explain the world. So also others (the world) can't explain Brahman to me. Others (the world) can't explain the world to me. Then there is no urge for speaking in me. There is an inner peace in me.

In the next line he explains ***'sataam sahaja sangnitam'***: 'sataam' = for the Jnanis, 'sahaja sangnitam'= it is the nature/Swabaavam. For Jnanis, this is the state that comes naturally due to this Jnanam. This is because of the Jnanam. If the Jnanam is not there, then this Maunam will not come. If this

Jnanam is there, it is the silence (Maunam) that comes in the mind natrually. The meaning is that in this silence, even if his mouth speaks, even if his ears are listening to the sound, there is no urge.

Always if we speak without the urge to argue, indeed that word alone would reach others. As long as there is the force/ urge that, with the help of argument, I have to establish, I have to explain and establish, we cannot make others understand.

We may get another doubt. If it is with the others we can understand. But we live with a few relations and friends. They could be relations, father, husband-wife, brother-sister, etc. We live with them. When we live thus, it will be good if they understand some matters, for Vyavahaaram to take place properly and for us to live happily. And if they do not understand certain matters, there are some problems and difficulties. Here we said that others cannot be made to understand. But only if we make them understand, could we live happily. So what are we to do?

Here only acceptance/ or Prarabdam comes. We have to accept that as Prarabdam. And have an attitude of acceptance. As long as they do not understand, we have to live with them only. How long? As long as our Punyam

manifests. When will we know that our Punyam has manifested. When we see that they have understood us. If others have understood us, it means that our Punyam has manifested. When does Papam manifest? As long as there is no understanding. So there is no choice. This is the truth. We should understand this. When we understand that "Others can't understand", that day we have got Moksham. This is what Sri Saankara calls ***"sahaja sangnitham"***.

That is why there is no resistance, no struggle. If others don't understand, we should understand that others cannot understand. But we should not openly state this, "I have understood that you cannot understand". Then they will argue that they can understand. Or they will say, "Who are you to say that I cannot understand". We should not tell them that. We should know that they cannot know; that they cannot understand. We have to keep this as a secret in our mind.

The silence of our vak (speech) due to this awarenss (knowledge) is Maunam. In the last sentence, ***"giraa maunam tu balaanaam"***. All the above is for a Jnani, one who has attained Jnanam.

What is the Maunam for the sadhakas who are in the early stages? ***'giraa maunam'***= not speaking through the mouth is Maunam. He

gives the Lakshanam for the normal Maunam. ***'giraa'*** means sound, not making a sound /speech (not speaking) is Maunam. This is for ***'balanaam'*** = for the 'spiritual children'/ Sadhakas in the early stages. '***Prayuktam'*** = it is given/ advised/ suggested. By whom? ***'brahma vaadibhihi'*** = by Jnanis.

For aspirants who are in the initial stages, Jnanis have advised **'not speaking'** as the Sadhana. But for Nididhyasaka Jnani, Maunam is ***'effortlessly being calm internally'***. For that this Jnanam is required. Only if it comes in, this urge to argue goes.

One of the big things that we have to understand in life is that, we can't easily make any one understand. The mental calmness that we get when we understand this is Jnani's Maunam. The Maunam that we as Sadhakas have to follow initially is 'not speaking'.

For Jnanis whether the mouth speaks or does not speak, Maumam is being as Brahman and becoming free from the urge to speak. It seems to be a simple matter. But in reality it is a big matter. Being quiet is the most difficult thing for us. Initially we take lot of effort and do practice to learn to speak. It takes lot more effort to stop speaking. It comes as a result of this Jnanam.

The fifth Sadhana is Desaha/ place.

V. Desaha (Place)

***"aadaavanthe cha madhye cha
jano Yasmin na vidyathe
yenedam sathatham vyaaptham
sa deso vijanah smruthaha".. Sl.110***

"Brahman in whom in all three Kalams (in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end) there are no people; by which Brahman at all times this world is pervaded, such Brahman is said to be the Desaha (place) without people (solitary place)"

In Yoga Sastram Desaha/ the place of Dhyanam (Meditation) which is to be chosen, is suggested. Desaha is an Angam of Dhyanam. A Sadhaka has to select his Desam for Dhyanam or some other Sadhanas. Patanjali states this. In Bhagawad Gita also Bhagawan Sri Krishna has spoken in this regard. What type of place is to be chosen for Meditation?

He suggested "suchau desaha" = a pure (clean) place. Or wherever we intend to do Dhyanam, we should clean (purify) that place. About the Desam (place) for Dhyanam, many concepts are mentioned.

One is cleanliness, next is "sama sthalam", a level place. We should not sit on a sloping stone kept for washing clothes and do Dhyanam. The place should be even and level. Even more important is "vijana sthalam", a place that is not frequently visited by people, a place without any people. All this is talked about in Dhyanam.

A Sadhaka should select a place where there are no people. If we do Dhyanam in a place where there are people we will get the thought, "Is the other person seeing me?" We will tend to open the eye and see. If others are around, their speech, actions would cause Sabdam and would become obstacles to our Dhyanam. "***vijana sthalam***" means a place without people, at least at the time of our Dhyanam.

Next point is "kalam". In a place, at some time many may come and go but at another time, no one might come. In the early morning, except the bed room all the places will be calm and peaceful. The reason is that no one would be there, at the time of Dhyanam.

Thus, "***vijana desaha***", a place where people would not come, a place without people, is mentioned in Yoga sastram.

In Gita also, Bhagawan had suggested "***arathi hi jana sansadi***", a state of mind that is not happy in group of people. People normally feel, "I need people always around me, I want people". Instead solitude ("thanimai", **தனிமை**), solitary place ("thanimaiyaana idam", **தனிமையான இடம்**), Vijana Sthalam, pure and clean place is suggested for a Sadhaka.

What type of place should a Nididhyasaka select for his Dhyanam? Is it a solitary place? In the beginning, in early stages we have to select a solitairy place and do the Sadhana. But what is the place that a Nididhyasaka should select?

SriSankara says that to whichever place we might go in this world, there will be someone or other to welcome us. So there is no "peopleless place" in this world. Even if we go alone, we are there and we are taking our mind. If we wish to go to an absolutely peopleless place, or a forest, after sometime lions and tigers could eat us off. Also we can't go to a place without any human and live, for we require the support of other human beings for food, place of stay, etc. At the same time, if we go into the human society, that is also a problem.

Being with humans is a problem, going away from humans is also not possible. Therefore this ‘vijanam’ is always a relative term. We have to select a place wihout much human presence.

Here, if one wants to go totally out of human presence, Sri Sankara says "Desaha = Brahman". Only If you "go and stay in the state of Brahman", do you go to total solitude. If you to any place (Desa) other than Brahman, you cannot have solitude. So Brahman is Desam he says.

If a Nididdhyasaka asks, "to which place should I go and sit to get solitude?", the answer is only if you go and stay in the state of Brahman do you get solitude.

Indeed for many, the proverb, " the grass on the other side of the fence is greener" ("ikkaraikku akkarai pachchai",**இக்கறைக்கு அக்கறை பச்சை**) applies. If anyone is asked if they like their place of stay, they will say that it is not alright. If one is asked if they like the house where they stay, the place of stay where they are, the Asrama in which they are, they will have some sense of lack or other. "We have to go to another place, this place of stay is not alright." The feeling that where they are is imperfect is there for eveyone. Place of stay is not alright, surroundings are not alright, the

neighbours are not alright, therefore there is ever the thought that "I should change my place". He will be going on changing his place, without changing himself!

Here Sri Sankara says wherever one goes, there will not be full peace, or full perfection. Everything will not be fit and proper, whatever we might do to select a good place and build a good house, etc. Only when we go to Brahman and sit, we are in total solitude.

Whatever the meaning was for "Maunam", the same is the meaning for "Desaha". Wherever else you might go it would be relative only. So Nididhyasaka should always be with the Brahman which is Desam. That is, he should be with the Jnanam ‘Aham Brahma’.

The meaning of all this is that a Nididhyasaka should not give importance to Desam. All places are the same for Nididhyasaka, whether it is a railway station, or whether we go and sit in a cave, the Nididhyasaka should be in the same state of mind. That is our goal.

If so why did Munis go to the cave? They went to practice Sadhanas such that later even if they are in the railway station they would have the same state of mind. So whatever the surrounding or situation, practicing to keep the

mind calm is the goal (Lakshyam). When one has come to the stage of a Nididhyasaka, he should not give extra importance to Desam.

In the initial stages, it is alright to be in a clean environment, etc. That is why we see that some Jnanis stay in the burial ground. It is not a clean place. (If seen in another angle, that indeed is a clean place. Our Sariram is being made pure there.) For such people there is no Niyamam. So also, with regard to the dress. That one has to be in clean dress is the rule. But for a Nididhyasaka, there is no rule that "he should be like this only". That is the essence here.

Sri Sankara gives the Lakshanam that Brahman is the Desam. In such Brahman in all the three Kaalams (times), people (Dwaitam) are not there. ***'aadau'*** in the beginning, ***'madhye'***, in the middle, ***'ante cha'*** at the end. With that Brahman, in all the three times, past, present and future, ***"janaha yasmin na vidyate"***, there are no people. There is no group, there is no Dwaitham/ duality.

If you ask elderly people they will tell you. An eighty year old person in Ayanavaram said "When I was 20 years old, there was not even a fly in these parts". A place which was solitary like that how is it today. At one point of time it was like a forest. How is it today? There is

congestion due to people today. This is "adau", "ante", "madhye"; in the beginning, in the interim (middle), and finally, at all times. If we see some places, at one point of time, it will be desolate like forest, then after some time, it will become a city and after some time it might again become like a forest. In this manner things will change.

Today if we wish to see places without people, such places will be few, places with people will be many. But, with that Brahman, at all times people are not seen. In the line, ***"ena idam satatam vyaaptam"***, Sri Sankara says, by that Brahman ***"idam satatam vyaaptam"***, at all times this (world) is pervaded. "Whether people are there or not, Brahman pervades all places".

Some people may get a doubt, if all of us go to Brahman, will the place be enough? Brahman is "sarva vyaapi". Even if all of us go there, there will be space. ***"ena satatam vyaaptam"***, by which Brahman all places are pervaded, ***"sa desaha vijanaha smrutaha"***. It is said to be the place without people (solitary place).

Only if I go to Brahman I can go to a place without any people. As long as we are in this Bhoolokam, we have to meet some person or the other. There is no choice for us in this. So

we cannot expect to go to a place where there is no person. People think that they will get peace (nimmathi, நிம்மதி) if they go to a desolate place, without people. Such a place is Brahman only. If we go to Brahman only, then can we get peace (nimmathi, நிம்மதி).

What is the Desam that should be selected by a Nididhyasaka? For Nididhyasaka, Desa Visesham (special place) is not there. But in the beginning stages, all such restrictions are there. All the Niyamams given by Bhagawan in Ch.6 of Bhagawad Gita we have to select and follow them. Calm place, clean place, "sama sthalam", all these are required in the beginning stages. Those who do Sadharana Dhyanam they would say Vijana Desam. They should select a place where there are no people. But for Nididhyasaka all these restrictions are not there.

For a Nididhyasaka, Brahman is the Desam. If he thinks that he is Brahman, he is without any people at all times.

Next is Kalam (Time), which is explained by Sri Sankara in the next Slokam.

VI. Kaalaha (Time)

"kalanaath sarva bhoothaanaam
brahmaadeenaam nimeshathaha

kaala sabdena nirdishtaha
akhandaananda kodvayaha .. Sl.111

"that Poorna, Andanda Swaroopa, non-Dual Brahman which brings out all the Living beings such as Brahma deva in no time, is indicated by the word 'Kala'"

The sixth Sadhana is Kaalam (Time). If we see Yoga Sastram, in which time (Kalam) what Sadhana should be done is spoken of. Kala Niyamam, the time which is good for doing Dhyanam, Brahma Muhurtham, etc., are told.

Jyotisha Sastram is an Angam of Veda. Rishis considered the planetary objects which are in nature through their knowledge and used the appropriate science. Today we consider various factors and predict that it would rain today or not, etc. But in Panchagam it has been carefully calculated and given that there will be an eclipse (Grahanam) on such and such time etc. How did they find out? So there is this science available to calculate the time. One should do this task at this time. All this is applicable in Karma Kandam. A Yagam, Puja or a new task if one does at this time, the nature would be supportive to that task.

If we are cycling and if the air is flowing in the opposite direction cycling would be difficult. We would be fighting the nature and

overcoming it. But if the air flows in the same direction as we are going, the nature would be supportive to our venture. Thus the Kala/ time calculation is to know the time when the support of the nature would be there for that task. Therefore in Karma Kandam, Jyotisha Sastram has an important part.

For the Sadhakas who are in the initial stages, there are guidelines as to when they should perform their Sadhanas and for what duration, etc. It also applies for those who are in Karma Kandam.

So also, which is a good time for Dhyanam, all these Niyamams are spoken of in Sastram. If it is said that it is good to perform all tasks in Brahma Muhurtham, it is the "milk man" who does his activity at that time. If you go for walking at 4 am, it is the milk van which alone will be moving at that time. It is his duty at that time. But can we do all our works at 4 am? Thus only certain works can be done at that time, certain other things cannot be done. For Dhyanam, or certan good Karyams to be performed there are ideal or good times.

Another concept in Kalam is the duration. How long should a person do Dhyanam or Sadhana? For any Asanam or Sadhana, the duration would have been told. For example, it should be done for 5 minutes or 10 mintues,

etc. So also for the Sadhana of Dhyanam, how long it should be done would be told. Next, the time when it would be good to do. Thus, for Dhyanam Kala Niyamam is advised. Time of meditation and duration of meditation. If we select after noon 2 pm for meditation, what will happen for the meditation? Straight away we will go to sleep only. Then how long should we do Dhyanam, etc.

We now come to Nididhyasaka. What is the Kalam for Nididhyasaka? When should he do Nididhyasanam? When should he not do Nididhyasanam? Can he do Nididhyasanam in Rahu Kalam, Gulika, Yama Gandam, etc.? This is the question.

Nididhyasanam is to be with the knowledge/ awareness that 'Aham Muktaha'. Therefore if a person decides not to do Nididhyasanam in Rahukalam, it means that time is Rahukalam (Samsaram) for him.

Thus what is the Kalam for Nididhyasaka? Here Sri Sankara's view is "For Nididhyasaka there is no Kala Niyama". There is no Niyamam that Nididhyasaka should do Dhyanam at this time, or Japam at this time etc.

For others there is a Niyamam, there is a Vyavastha, when to do certain things; when not to do certain things. Sri Sankara says for a

Nididhyasaka there is no time restriction. Whenever he wishes or likes to do Nididhyasanam, he should do. If his mind is calm and happy, he can just be quiet. When "Vipareeta Bhavana" comes, (Vipareeta Bhavana will not select the time to come, irrespective of time being a Rahukalam or Yama Gandam). If "Vipareeta" persons stand before us, Vipareeta Bhavana will come. Then the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam should be commenced. Karanam? Jivanmukti has no Kala Niyamam or time. It is there naturally through out life.

Whenever, and for whatever period he likes to do, he should do Nididhyasanam. But Dhyanam is not like that. In the beginning, due to over enthusiasm if one does Dhyanam, something may happen. It should not be done like that. It should be started in a limited manner with care. Nididhyasanam results in relaxation. We cannot say that by doing Nididhyasanam, we have become tired. Nididhyasaka has no Kala (Time) restrictions. He can do Nididhyasanam, whenever and for whatever duration that he desires.

It is bringing Atma Jnanam and being with that knowledge, living with this knowledge, doing Vyavaharam with that knowledge. Realizing ourselves to be Poornam, doing that Bhavana and living with the world. How?

Bhagawan has given certain Gunams, "adweshtaa sarva bhootaanam", etc. Without hating any one, with love, living with every one with a feeling friendhsip. There is no Kala Niyama for that. This is the core theme.

Here also Sri Sankara Kalaha = Brahman. And he gives a Lakshanam (Definition) and Karanam (Reason) for that. If Nididhyasaka is as Brahman, it is enough. Brahman is Kalam. How can we say Kalam is Brahman?

Kalaha has two meanings. ***"kalanaat sarva bhootaanam brahmaadeenaam"*** = Kalam is that which brings out all the living beings such as Brahma deva etc. That which brings out, is Kalam.

We say time will bring out, it is enough if we wait. What should we do for a bud to blossom into a flower? Just by time, it will blossom. Thus as Brahman Kalam brings out all Jiva rasis and creation, "nimeshataha" = just in a while, within no time, independently. Thus Kalanam means that which brings out (creates) everything.

The other meaning is not told here by Sri Sankara. The second meaning of Kalam is Adhaaram or Adhishtaanam for every thing. This Bhoomi is Adhaaram for us. So also Kalam is our Adhaaram.

How is that? Suppose the life span of a person is 65 years (life span is decided by Prarabdam). In such a case, where is he standing? He is standing in that Kalam. If the Kalam is crossed, the next second his body will fall. The reason is that he is standing in that Kalam. He is standing in that Prarabdam. Once the Kalam is over he will be unable to stand. Thus Kalam is supporting us. We are talking, studying and doing a host of things. What is the Karanam? Kalam is the Karanam. If the Kalam is over, then life would be over. Thus, for them to be in such a manner, Kalam is the Karanam.

Brahman is Sarva Adhaaram, Brahman is Sarva Utpatti Karanam. For everything, Brahman is Karanam. For everything to be in such and such a manner, Brahman is Karanam. So ***"Kaala Sabdena Nirdishtaha"***. Thus that Brahman is described by the word 'Kala'. By the word Kala, Brahman is explained. What type of Brahman? ***"Akhanda Anandakaha Adwayaha"***. "The one and only (non-dual), Poorna (complete), bliss natured Brahman is indicated by the word 'Kala'.

Here Sri Sankara says Brahman= Kala. For Nididhyasaka there is no Kala Niyamam. Being Brahman is Kala for him. From this we understand time concepts are not there for Nididhyasaka.

The time schedule, discipline to do a task at a specified time, etc., are all important in the beginning stages. One should not say, I am also a Nididhyasaka, I will do whatever at anytime. If one has maturity to such an extent, one could say that. Otherwise doing things at appropriate times is very important. Time discipline and punctuality are all very important. After studying this we should not say that there is no Kala Niyama for me, and we should not go away from that discipline.

For Nididhyasaka, being as Brahman is Kalam for him. Sri Sankara has given the meaning ***"Kalanaat Sarva Bhootaanaam"***, from which everything has come and with whose support support (Adhaaram) everything is there, that is Brahman.

Sri Sankara states that there is no stiplutated time or Kalam. If one states that he is doing a certain thing at one particular time, or from this time to this time, it is evident that he is not doing that action at other times. Being in Nididhyasanam, is to be with the thought that “I am full”. If one gives a Kala Niyama for this, it means that at other times "I would not think that I am full”.

For Dhyanam or Japam, Kala Niyama is there, but for Nididhyasanam, there is no Kala Niyama. Kala Niyama is also Brahman only.

Nididhyasaka thinks that He is Brahman at all times. Jivan Mukti is not limited to a ‘Kalam’ or time period.

This is the sixth Sadhana. In the next sloka the seventh Sadhana is given.

VII. <u>Asanam</u>

"sukhenaiva bhaved yasmin
ajasram brahma chinthanam
aasanam tad vijaaneeyaath
netharath sukha naasanam" .. Sl.112

"In whichever Asana the thought of Brahman Happens effortlessly for Adhika Kaalam know that to be the Asanam. Asanam should not be such as to cause difficulty to us"

The seventh Angam or Sadhana is Asanam/ posture. This is explained in Sl.112 and Sl.113.

For Dhyanam, Asanam is specified in Yoga Sastra. Sitting in which Asanam should one do Dhyanam? Patanjali has given the Lakshanam for Asanam, sitting in which is better.

The word Asanam has two meanings. We have studied this in Gita. One is the type of seating/ seat/ chair/place in which we must sit

and do Dhyanam. It should not be too soft or too hard (very Katinam), it should be Samam. In earlier days, the kings used to have Simhaasanam. Another meaning for Asanam is how to sit. Body’s posture/ how should the body be, during dhyanam. Thus, two meanings are there for Asanam - seat, & sitting posture. In this place, the manner of sitting is taken. How is one to sit and do Dhyanam?

There are many types of Asanams. In which Asana should Nididhyasaka sit and do Nididhyasanam? That is the question. In this Sloka, Sri Sankara explains. We can see the freedom that one gets upon becoming a Nididhyasaka. There is no Niyamam at all. Whatever aspect you may take, it is said that it is not for Nididhyasaka. Sri Sankara says for Nididhyasaka there is no Asana Niyama at all. He can sit in whatever Asana and in whatever manner and do Nididhyasanam.

If you see the sitting posture of some people, their leg will be placed higher than their heads. They will sit like that and may be reading or seeing something. If we ask, can one do Nididhyasanam in that posture, Sri Sankara would say, "Yes you could do. You can do in whatever manner". Can a person lie down and do if we ask, yes one could do. Can a person do Nididhyasanam while travelling standing in a bus, yes he could do. "One could

do Nididhyasanam in whatever Asana". That is the reply here.

But, for doing Japam, Dhyanam or Pooja, there are Asana restrictions. We can't be lying and do Pooja. They shold be done as per the requirement. But for Nididhyasanam this restriction is not here. There is no Nibandhana (Condition) in anything and there is freedom in everything. Whichever posture gives you Santhosham, do Nididhyasanam in that posture.

Our normal sitting posture on floor is called Sukha Asanam, in this posture one could sit with Sukham (ease, without difficulty) for a longer period. It is a simple Asanam. Beyond a certain age even this may not be possible. If we put one leg over another and sit, it is called Artha Padma asanam. If we put both the legs one over another it is called Padma Asanam (Criss cross). If one asks in what Asanam should a Nididhyasaka do Dhyanam, generally one would suggest Padma Asanam or Artha Padma Asanam or Sukha Asanam.

Here Sri Sankara says, in whichever posture your mind does not go to the body and instead goes to the Lakshyam (goal), that is the Asanam. Sitting posture is not important. It is important that our mind should go to the goal

(Laskhyam). That is all. This Lakshanam is given here. One could sit any Asanam.

"Sukhena eva bhaved yasmin ajasram Brahma chinthanam". In Line 1, Sri Sankara introduces our Lakshyam (goal) as "***Brahma Chinthanam***" – thinking of Brahman, thought about Brahman. ***Yasmin,*** in whichever Asana /posture; ***Brahma Chinthanam,*** the thought of Brahman; ***Sukhena bhaved***, happens effortlessly; ***ajasram***, for Adhika Kaalam, without interruption/ obstruction; ***asanam tad vijaaneeyaat,*** know that to be the Asanam.

The posture in which when we sit we could easily, without any difficulty, have the thought about Brahman, for Adhika Kaalam, without interruption/ obstruction, that posture is the Asanam.

Certain Asanas are given to be ideal for Dhyanam. For certain Pujas, worshipping of Iswara, there are certain Mudras. Sri Sankara states that for Nididhyasaka there is no specific Asanam. "***sukhena bhavet yasmin***". Whichever posture facilitates our sitting for a long period without difficulty, that is Asana. Here the importance is not for the posture, but "***Brahma Chintanam ajasram bhavet***". For Brahma Chintanam to happen uninterruptedly, sitting in whatever manner is the right one. Then he says '***na sukha nasanam***', Asanam

should not cause Nasam to our Sukham. It should not be such as to cause difficulty to us.

Sri Sankara does not specifiy the Asanam. To each person as appropriate, whichever Asanam facilitates such Brahma Chintanam that is the Asanam. This depends on the individual's physical condition and state. Some people would get the thought or idea to do Dhyanam after 65 years only. Some people would have heard the word "Dhyanam" only after this age. After such an age, the body would be flexible only to a limited extent.

Here the Lakshyam is Brahman. Whatever may be our Lakshyam, the Asanam in which we would be able to pursue that Lakshyam in an easy, uninterrupted, continuous manner, "know that to be the Asanam". "***na itarat",*** others are not the appropriate Asanam.

There is no condition or Nibanadana. There is no condition that "You should sit like this only. If you do not sit like this, Brahman would not come in your Manas", etc. Or else that you cannot do Japam. All such restrictions are not there.

If so what is not Asanam? Sri Sankara specifically states. "***na itarat",*** not others; "***sukha nasanam",*** that which destroys our comfort or Sukham is not Asanam.

If we have to sit in an Asanam and do Dhyanam, and if that Asanam itself is very painful, the attention of our mind would go to the body. The reason why the feeling of pain is given by Bhagawan is to make us focus our attention to that place. "Give your attention here". We are walking on the road. Our toe hits a stone. If we feel pain there our attention goes to that toe and we should attend to that toe/wound. We do the needful and rectify it. If we do not feel that pain whatever the hurt, on returning home we might even find that we have lost a few toes. The reason is that we would not know.

Pain demands attention. When we sit in an Asanam if the pain is too much, our attention would go to that place, and our attention would not go to our Lakshyam of Brahman. So he says ***"na sukha nasanam"***. What destroys our Sukham or comfort is not the Asanam.

From this, we understand that for Dhyanam or Nididhyasanam, whatever Asanam is comfortable for us, that is appropriate. The Asanam in which we can sit for a longer time that is appropriate.

In the next Sloka, a person (Purva Pakshi) says that there is an Asanam called Siddha Asanam, should one sit in that Asana only for

doing Nididhyasanam? In the next Sloka Sri Sanakra replies.

Asanam (contd)

"sidhdham yath sarva bhootaadi
viswaadhishtaanam avyayam
Yasmin siddhaha samaavishtaahaa
tadvai siddhaasanam viduhu" .. Sl.113

"That Brahman which is already ready and prepared; which is the Karanam for all Bhootaas; which is the Adharam for the Viswam; which unchanging; in which all Jnanis go and merge; Jnanis say that such Brahman itself is Siddhasanam"

In Yoga Sastram while discussing about Asanams, names of many Asanas are mentioned. Siddhasanam is the name of an Asanam. It is a simple Asanam in which we sit on the floor. The normal manner in which we sit on the floor is called Sukhasanam. Siddhasanam is similar to the Sukahsanam.

One might think that if we sit in Siddhasanam and do Nididhyasanam, then only the Nididhyasanam would fructify. Is it is compulsory for Sadhaka? If some one were to tell that if you sit in Siddhasanam or Padmasanam then alone could you contemplate about Brahman, Sri Sankara says it is not

correct. He says that for Jnani or Nididhyasaaka, Brahman alone is the Siddhasanam or Padmasanam. It is not necessary that the Jnani should sit in such an Asanam to see Brahman.

But in this context, Sri Sankara gives the meaning Siddhasanam = Brahman. It is enough if one sits '"with" Brahman. They should not sit "anywhere else" ("with anything else").

How is it? In 'Siddhasanam' there are two words, (i) Siddham and ii. Asanam. How does this word indicate Brahman?

'Siddham' means that which is already attained/ already prepared. If some one were to ask is the food prepared, if we were to reply in Sanskrit, we say Siddham. Siddham means ready. Sanyasi have another name Siddha Annam. The rule for Sanyasi is that he should not light a fire and cook his food. If so, what about his food? Rule for him is 'dont cook your food, seek bhiskha and eat'. The only source for him is to take Bhiksha and take food. Taking Bhiksha and eating is the life style for a Sanyasi. What type of Bhiksha will he get? He gets Siddham Annam, he will get cooked food. Thus Sanyasi is one who is Siddha Annaha. Who so ever gets cooked food is called Siddha Annaha. Thus Siddham means already cooked. It is already ready in that form.

Brahman is Siddha vastu. He is already ready. [We can't say, I want to meet Brahman, but He is not ready]. He is ever-ready. How Brahman Siddham? How is it ready? "aham sabdena". Whenever I say, "I, I", in that word "I" Brahman is already ready as "aham, aham". Thus Siddham = Brahman.

Everthing else that we do in life is Sadhyam only. Food itself is as Sadhyam as rice, dhal etc, then it becomes food upon cooking, Siddham.

This Brahman is Siddham always. Then for Asanam there is another meaning. Asanam is Laya Sthanam. ***'aasyate upavisyate asmin iti Asanaha'***. That into which everything comes and merges is Asanam. So who is Brahman? He is present always and into Him everything comes and merges. Here Sri Sankara says that Siddhas have attained such a Brahman. Such Brahman itself is Siddha Asanam.

After attaining such Brahman, who is of the Swaroopam of Siddhasanam, there is no need for the Jnanis to adopt the Asanams given in Yoga Sastram. Brahman itself is Siddhasanam. Siddhas or Jnanis have already attained it. Therefore it is not required that Siddhas should adopt the Asanams given in Yoga Sastram to contemplate on such Brahman.

In Asana Visesham, there are descriptions how one should do Namaskaram (Sashtanga Namaskaram, etc) in a temple. How to do Namaskaram to each Devatha is described and in which Asanam. Sastram has described all this. So also the Asanam in which you must be while doing Namaskaram is told. In Puja you would have seen Mudras, etc. Each Devata is be given obeisance in particular Mudra and worshipped. Our giving respect to a person is also a Mudra. So also there is a Mudra to express anger. So also Asanam is a Mudra to worship a Devata.

In what Asana should I be, while contemplating on Brahman? Sri Sankara says that Asanam itself is Brahman, so Nididhyasaka is not required to sit in any Asanam. This is the essence here.

"Yat siddham", that which is already ready and prepared and Poornam; ***"Sarva bhootaadi"*** =adi means Karanam (cause), Brahman is the Karanam for all Bhootaas. It is Sidhdham and it is the Karanam for all Bhootas. ***"Viswa adhishtaanam"*** = it is the substrate for the Viswam (cosmos), it is Sthithi Karanam; ***"Avyayam"*** = at the same time it does not decay or change. It is as it is, indestructible or eternal, it is ever effulgent in the Vritti "aham"; ***"Yasmin Sidhdhaaha samaavishtaaha"*** = in that Siddha Brahman, all Jnanis go and merge;

"Sidhdhasanam tad viduhu' = Jnanis say that that is Siddhasanam. That Brahman itself is said to be Siddhasanam.

In that Brahman, ***"Siddhaha samaa-vishtaaha"*** = Jnanis are sitting in this Brahman only, they are with this Brahman only. For Jnani Siddhasanam is Brahman only. So there is no need for Asana Visesham, a special type of Asana.

Thus we saw the explanation for 7 words.

In the next Sloka, we have to see the 8 th Sadhana.

VIII. Moola Bandhaha

"Yanmoolam sarva bhoothaanaam
yanmoolam chiththa bandhanam
Moola bandhaha sadaa sevyaha
yogosau raja yoginaam".. Sl.114

"Brahman which is the Karanam for all the Bhoothaas; which is the Karanam for MoolaBandham. This Yoga is always done by Raja Yogis"

The next Sadhana word taken by Sri Sankara for explanation is Moola Bandhaha. This is also a concept that is talked in Yoga Sutra.

Moola bandhaha has two meanings. One meaning is this. If we have an obstacle or difficulty for us, we can remove it in two ways. One is to remove the symptom or external manifestation. Or we can go to the Karanam or cause and remove it. For any problem there will be a Moola Karanam (root cause). Moola Bandhaha is the Sadhana or action that we undertake to remove that Moola Karanam, removal of the root cause.

If a person has head ache, he takes a pain killer so that he does not feel that pain. Head ache goes away, but we have not removed what has caused that head ache. What he has done is to arrest the effect (Karyam). Finally he finds that he has a problem in his eyes, and that it is the root cause (Moola Karanam). He then goes to an eye specialist. We will not wonder that when he has pain in the head, why he is going to an eye specialist! He is engaging in the Sadhana to remove the Moola Karanam. Finding out the Karanam, he engages in its 'Bandham', its removal. Moola Bandhaha means going to the Moolam and removing it. Moola Bandhaha is the Sadhana to remove the Moola Karanam for the effect. This is the first meaning.

The second meaning is: Moola bandha is one type of Asanam, which is to be done while sitting in Padmasanam.

Now what is the Sadhana of Moola Bandham which is to be done by a Nididhyasaka? What ‘Moolam’ or root cause that must be (’Bandham’) removed by Nididhyasaka? Or should he perform the Asanam of ‘Moola Bandham’?

Sri Sankara says both are not necessary for a Nididhyasaka. This is the essence. He need not do the Moola Bandha Asanam. Also by getting Atma Jnanam, he has already removed Ajnanam (ignorance) which is the ‘Moolam’ or root cause for Samsaram. After his removing ignorance, what Moola or cause is there for binding (bandham) for him? His problem is not Ajnanam.

In the initial stages, Ajnanam is the cause for all our Anarthams (problems). A person might make a mistake due to ignorance. We might forgive a person if he does it out of ignorance. But if he does the mistakes after he knows (after getting Jnanam), then we say that he is doing the mistake despite knowing that it is wrong.

Thus initially our problem is ignorance. But later, though there is knowledge, there is some obstacle for that knowledge to be implemented. That is the second problem. The problem of Nididhyasaka is not the ‘Moola Karanam’ of Ajnanam. He has removed this problem even

during Sravana Avastha itself. He has done the Bandham of that Moola by Vicharam. He has arrested (done Bandham) of the Moola. How? By Vicharam he has already removed it.

Now what should he do? His problem is that his own Samskarams are acting as obstacles to that (Jnanam) knowledge. That is, he is the obstacle to his own knowledge. If anyone else is the obstacle we could remove it. If we ourselves are the obstacle what are we to do? Nididhyasanam is for that purpose only.

Here Sri Sankara says, for Nididhyasaka, Moola Bandham is not a particular type of Asanam or removing the Moolam (root cause), Brahman is the Moolam for him. Sri Sankara gives the meaning for Moola Bandham as Brahman.

We saw that Desam is Brahman. He should go and sit in the Desa of Brahman. Kalam is Brahman, it is enough if he is as Brahman. So also Moola Bandhaha is also Brahman. What should he do? He should surrender to that Moola Bandham of Brahman. If he is as Brahman it is enough. He must be as ‘Poornam’, he should not be as "Alpaha". Without being the Anatma that he might have been, he should be as pure, Brahman.

How does Sri Sankara explain Moola Bandhaha to be Brahman?

'yan moolam sarva bhoothaanaaam': to all Jiva Rasis whatever is the Moolam; Brahman is the Karanam for all the Bhoothaas.

Normally, for Samsaram (sorrow) we should not say that Brahman is the Moolam. The Moola Karanam or root cause for Samsaram is Ajnanam. But for the Prapancham the Karanam is Brahman. Surrendering to that Moolam is the Sadhana of Moola Bandham for Nididhyasaka.

Also ***'yan moolam chiththa bandha-nam'.*** Here Sri Sankara presents in a particular manner. Generally we are asked to discipline the mind. It seems to be alright to leave our mind as it is. But when we attempt to discipline it, we find it difficult. We discipline the mind only to attain that Iswara, ***'brahma darsanaartham'***. The Laskhyam or goal of attaining Iswara (Iswara Darsanam) is the Karanam for disciplining our mind. Then only could we know and realise the Poorna Brahman. That is Moksham.

Here Sri Sankara tells in a reverse manner. He says that for one's mind to be disciplined the Karanam is Brahman. Because of Brahman only his mind is disciplined. If

Brahman is not there his mind would not get disciplined. Thus for 'Chiththa Bandhanam' the Karanam is Brahman.

First ***"Brahma darsanaartham chiththa bandhanam"***. One disciplines his mind to see Brahman. Second, because he has seen Brahman, his mind is disciplined.

Calmness of mind comes in two stages. In the first stage, keeping Brahman as Lakshyam, mind should be disciplined. If we seek to attain Brahman, we should not cause Chanchalam (disturbance) to the mind. Mind should be kept in one track. Thus with effort we do disciplining of mind in the beginning. Then, we have seen Brahman, we have attained that Brahman. Then what would happen to the mind. As we have attained Brahman, the mind would be disciplined. For, along with Brahma Jnanam, we also get the Jnanam that this Jagat is mithya, poy (பொய்). Therefore, there is no external Vishayam for mind at all.

Earlier, there were external Vishyams and with difficulty, we disciplined the mind. Now there is no 'external Vishayam'. Therefore the mind is naturally calm and disciplined.

Thus for the mind to be disciplined, the Karanam is Brahman. If there were to no Brahman at all, then in both the above stages,

we cannot discipline the mind. If there is no Lakshyam of Brahman, why would we discipline the mind? Secondly, as there is only Brahman, the mind is staying put in discipline. (kattukkul irukkirathu, **கட்டுக்குள் இருக்கிறது**).

Sadhaka who is in the initial stages, in order to see Brahman is calm and disciplined. Nididhyasaka, as he has seen Brahman, he is calm and disciplined. Both these two have two types of calmness. Sadhaka is calm and Jnani is also calm. Sadhaka has kept his mind calm and disciplined, as he wants to see and attain Brahman. Siddha as he has seen Brahman, he has kept his mind calm and disciplined.

What is the difference between the two? In the first calmness, there is effort. And in the other calmness is effortless. In the first, with great effort and difficulty he is calm. In the second, he is naturally calm.

Thus for Jnani's mind to be naturally calm the Karanam is Brahman. ***'yan moolam chiththa bandhanam',*** for the mind to become disciplined Brahman is the Moolam Karanam. Jnani has seen Brahman, so he is calm. Sadhaka does penance or Tapas to attain Brahman, Sidhdha does Tapas for he has attained Brahman. Tapas happens in him naturally. Tapas has become his Swabavam. His life itself is Tapas.

Sri Sankara referes to the second. Whichever Brhman is the Karanam for Jnani's mind to be calm, ***'tat moola bandhaha'***. That is the Moola Bandhaha, that Brahman is the Moola Bandham.

Sri Sankara thus gives two reasons, for Moola Bandham. First for all Jiva Rasis, Brahman is the Moolam or Karanam. The second, for our manam to become calm Brahman is the Karanam. ***'asau yogaha raaja yoginaam sadaa sevyaha'.*** Generally we call those who do Hata Yogam as Rajayogis. They are people who have given a long period of time for mind discipline and Tapas. But these Raja Yogis are those who have surrendered themselves to this Brahman. ***'sadaa sevyaha'*** They should do this alone, they should surrender themselves to such Moola Bandha Brahman. This is the fit one, this alone should be done. He should be as such a Brahman, he does not need other Moola Bandhas.

"Be as the Brahman". In all these Slokas, the advice is to be with the knowledge ***'aham Brahma'***.

The next 9 th Sadhana.

IX. Deha Samyam

"angaanaam samathaam vidyaath

same brahmani leenathaam
nau chennaiva samaanatwam
rujutwam sushka vrikshavath" .. Sl.115

"Use of Angams (such as Karma Indriyam, Jnana Indriyam, Manam, Buddhi, Chittam, etc.) in proper and balanced manner is Samataa, as this Sadhaka has merged in the Brahman that is Sama Swaroopam. If he is not in such manner, Samaanatwam would not happen, he would only be straight like a dry stick only"

Among the 15 Sadhanas the 9 th Sadhana is "Deha Saamyam". Deha's (Body’s) position, posture, state; means being proper (saamyam). In Yoga Sutram Patanjali explains how body should be while doing Dhyanam. It should be "Sushka Vrikshavat", the body should be motionless and straight "like a dry stick". Bhagawan Sri Krishna stated that neck, body, head, these three should be in a straight line. Keeping the body properly straight. While doing Dhyanam one should sit straight and not in a slackened posture. This is Deha Saamyam.

When we are engaged in the Sadhana of Dhyaanam how should our Deham or body be?

Can we sit in Padmasanam and make our head touch the ground and do Dhyaanam, can

our Deham be like that? Can we lie down in Padamasanam and do Dhyaanam? All these are different types of Asanas. In Yoga sastra, it is said that the Deham should be straight while doing Dhyanam. We should be sitting and our body, neck and head should be in a straight line, for Dhyanam. This is the proper Asanam for Dhyanam. Even if we are lying down in Savaasanam, these three parts will normally be in a straight line. But, if we relax the body too much while doing Dhyanam, we will get the Dosham of Nidra (sleep). We will go to sleep. If we stand and attempt to do Dhyanam, we will lose balance and fall off. The reason is that more attention is going to the body. We should not give attention to the body the, instead we should give attention to the mind in Dhyanam.

If we sit and keep the three parts in a straight line, we are giving attention to the body to some extent and are taking our remaining attention to the mind. So in Yoga Sastram, Deha Samyam has been mentioned. Bhagawan Sri Krishna also tells in Gita, says that the body should be kept in a straight line. The place where we sit should be Samam and our sitting posture should also be straight. If one practices Dhyanam when one is young, no problem would come in advanced ages. As we have not practiced this while we were young, we are habituated to sit in crooked postures. The chairs are themselves are coming in

crooked styles. In earlier days, one could only see straight backed chairs. Today's chairs are coming in different styles and shapes. If we sit in that chair we can only sit with 8 bends (like "Ashta Vakra").

Instead the body should be straight, is the Niyamam (rule) in Yoga Sastram. The example which Sastram gives for "Deha Saamyam" is "Sushka Vrikshaha", straight like a dry stem of a tree.

In another context, Sastra gives the example of dry stem in a negative sense. The dry stick would not bend, it will be straight. The green stick would accommodate and bend when wind blows. The dry stick would not bend and it will break when excessive wind blows. This itself is a lesson in life. If we accommodate and bend in life we will survive any problem or difficulty. If we don’t accommodate or bend, we will fall. As the plant ages, the ability to bend is lost. So it will not withstand in the windy season. The same tree when it was young and green could withstand many wind seasons. When its time is over it cannot accommodate or bend. So also if a person were to fall, his ability to bend and accommodate would go. This is in a negative sense.

Here in the context of Dhyanam, the "Sushka Vriksha" example is given in a positive

sense. It is a Niyama (rule) that is given for Dhyanam. One cannot say that one will bend and adopt a bent posture in Dhyanam. Sushka Vrikshavat is a positive example for a Dhyana Sadhaka. (But in life not bending and not accommodating is a negative example. In life, in transaction one should not be like a Sushka Vriksha, one has to be aware of the practicalities and live.) For a Dhyana Sadhaka Sushka Vriksha is a postive supportive example.

For a Nididhyasaka what is the Sadhana of "Deha Saamyam". For a Nididhyasaka no such Sadhana of "being motionless like a dry stick". His Sadhana is being as Brahman that is "Samam", being "Samam" in everything, having the Bhavana of Samatwam towards all Jiva Rasis (living beings). There is no High - low, good – bad, or Dharma –Adharma. It is transcending these and having a Bhavana (attitude) of "Samam".

Here Sri Sankara gives the meaning for Deha Samyam in a different manner. Having told that for a Nididhyasaka there is no Asana Visesham (specific Asanam), the restriction that Deham should be kept straight, etc., would not be applicable to him. Sri Sankara gives the meaning of "Samatwam" or "Samanatwam" for Deha Samyam.

With every one and in all places Nididhyasaka should function with Samatwam (in a balanced manner). Samanatwam is differerent from Rujutwam. Rujutwam means being straight like the dry branch. Some doctors give the same medicine to all the patients. Some people will have the same answer to everybody. Samanatwam means behaving with Samatwam to each person as appropriate.

What is Samatwam here? This Jeevan Mukta or Nididhyasaka Saadhaka, will keep all the Angams that he has in a "sama" manner. He would be Samam in his food, his Drishti, his sleep, his efforts (work), etc. Bringing balance in all these is what a Nididhyasaka should do. Stating this is very simple, but adopting such life style is very difficult. Bringing balance in all the aspects is very very difficult.

We are not balanced in our duty itself. There are some duties to be performed in the house. There are some duties to be performed in the office. One has to be balanced in both these duties. One has to be in the house when he should be there, and one has to be in the office when one should be there. Some people would be at home during office time and will be in office when they should be at home. If the home were to be like a jail, they would prefer to be office and come home, just for sleeping.

Thus we are not being Samam even in our duties. If we have 10 duties, we should perform all the 10 duties in a balanced manner. We should not be doing such duties that we like to perform and avoid performing the duties that we do not like.

Nididhyasaka would keep all his Angams in a Sama manner. His Karma Indriyams, Jnana Indriyams, Manas, Buddhi, Chittam, all his Angams are kept in a balanced manner. This is what he should do. Our final goal, if we keep all the things with balance (alavu , அளவு), there is no danger for us. Even poison when taken in a proper manner becomes a medicine. What indeed is medicine? Indeed diluted poison is medicine. Antibiotics is indeed poison. We are giving it in small measure. If it is given in overdose, then one will see the negative effects. Thus even Visham when it is given in small measures become medicine.

Sri Sankara says that in the beginning stages of Sadhana, let the Sadhaka sit straight like a dry branch. The Nididhyasaka has to use each of his Angams (limbs) in a Sama manner. He should keep them in such a manner. Use of mind and intellect also are to be similar. All these are to be kept Samam, each of them should be balanced.

Indeed all our struggle is for this balance only. We are not able to be in balance normally. Either we are in one extreme or in the other extreme. Either we are running or we are sleeping. Walking calmly does not seem to be our way. We are not being Satwik, we are either in Rajas or in Tamas. Some people are like this, if they start working - they keep working. If they start sleeping they continue sleeping. The students during exam time keep studying. When the exams are over, they will be wasting their time in sleep. We are thus being in extremes. Instead we should be Samam.

Next question. How is the Nididhyasaka able to be Samam? That Brahman itself is Sama Swaroopam. Sri Sankara brings Brahman here again. As Brahman is Sama Swaroopam, and as the Nididhyasaka has become Layam, one with that Brahman, his each Angam has attained 'Sama' state. ***"angaanam samataam vidyaat"***. Use of Angams such as Karma Indriyam, Jnana Indriyam, Manam, Buddhi, Chittam, etc., to the extent it is ***"samam"*** is to be understood to be as "Samataa" or "Saamyam". The reason is ***"same Brahmani leenataam"***. This Sadhaka has merged in the Brahman that is ***"samaha"***. He has merged in the Brahman which is Sama Swaroopam. ***"no chet"***, if he is not in such manner, ***"naiva***

samaanatwam", Samaanatwam would not happen. Being in balance would not happen.

Merging in the Brahman which is Sama Swaroopam is Deha Saamyam. Otherwise he would be straight like the dry branch. If he submits himself to such a Brahman whch is Sama Swaroopam he would get Samanatwam. If he does not submit himself to such a Brahman, he would sitting just straight that is all.

Thus being accommodative in transaction is indeed Samatwam. This should also not be understood as being accommodative always. Where one should be straight there one should stand straight, where one should be accommodative one should be accommodative. Being plaint always is not correct and it is a mistake also. Where one sould be strict one should be strict there and where one should be accommodative one should be plaint there. That is, Samatwam should be understood to be that of the Angams which are submitted to the Sama Swaroopa Brahman. Otherwise Rujutwam will happen but not Samatwam.

That is for the Nididhyasaka, keeping the body straight is not a requirement. Does it mean that he can be bent and lying and do Nididhyasanam? The importance is not for the posture here. He has already done Japam and

Upasana for Chitta Suddhi and has already practiced sitting straight. So for a Nididhyasaka the important Saamyam is to be with Brahman only.

X. Drik Sthihi

"drishtim jnana mayeem krithvaa
pasyeth Brahma mayam jagath
saa drishtihi paramodaaraa
na naasaagra avalokinee" .. Sl.116

"Making his vision one of Jnanam, Nididhyasakashould see the Jagat as pervaded by Brahman. Such vision is supreme. He need not see the tip of the nose as advised for the Sadhakas in initial stages of Sadhana"

In two Slokas 116 and 117, the next Sadhana "Drik Stithihi" is described.

Drik is Vision, Stithi is position. How should the position of our eye Indriyam be? In the normal sense, "Drik Stithihi" (the state of the vision, how the eyes should be) is an Angam of Dhyanam. When we do Dhyanam where should our Drik (vision, view, or sight) should be? When we do Dhyanam how should our eyes be, what should we do with our eyes? Can they be open, or should they be shut

tightly, such is the doubt that one gets. Can we keep our eyes open and do Dhyanam?

Even if we are in a separate room, we will start seeing the surroundings. This is not to be done. If we were to close our eyes tightly, we will experience tension. If we close them lightly we could get sleep. We have the habit of closing our eyes during sleep. Because of that Vasana, we could get sleep. So what should we do?

In Yoga Sastram, it is suggested that in the intial stages of Sadhana, eyes should be half closed & half open (Artha Nimeelanam). This is the "Drik Stithihi" that one has to train.

Bhagawan Sri Krishna has told about this also. It should be as if we are seeing the tip of our nose. Eyes should not see the tip, it should be as if we are seeing the nose tip. How the eyes should be half closed, how they should be focused, how should our vision be, If these are not told, one may be seeing here and there in Dhyanam.

So in Dhyanam it has been told very clearly. It is suggested that the eyes should be as if one is seeing the tip of the nose ("Naasa Agram"). "Nothing should be seen by the eyes and yet eyes are to be open". Thus in Dhyanam, eyes should be open yet they should

not see anything. Similarly it is also suggested that one should see the middle of the eye brows. In the example Bhagawan uses the word "iva", as if.

"Naasa Agram" means tip of the nose. When we tend to see the tip of the nose, our sight is withdrawn from outside objects and yet we are not seeing the nose tip. Eye should be as if half closed and half open.

The intention is that the Sadhaka should not see the external world. If he sees the external world, he cannot do Dhyanam. During Dhyanam he should not see the external objects and he should not also sleep. Without sleeping, he should also be not be using his eyes.

Thus, as per Yoga Sastram the Sadhaka should do this in the initial stages. This is the "Drik Stithihi" for a Sadhaka doing Dhyanam.

What is the "Drik Stithi" for the Nididhyasaka? Sri Sankara explains in an interesting manner. He need not close his eyes. He should see the world with his eyes, in a special manner.

In the beginning stages, the Sadhana of Damaha is given, when there are restrictions. He should see this or he should not see this,

etc. But, when one is about to get Jnana Nishta there is no object that he should not see. The key point is how should he see the objects.

In this beautiful Sloka, one method of how Jnani should see the world is explained. (In the next Sl.117, another aspect of "Drik Stithihi" is explained).

“drishtim jnana mayeem kritwaa pasyeth Brahma mayam jagat". “drishti" is Jnani's vision. ***“drishtim jnana mayim kritwaa"***, making his vision one of Jnanam, ***"jagat pasyeth"*** he should see the Jagat, the world. He has to change his vision as one of Jnanam and he should see the world. He should see world as ***"Brahma mayam"***, as pervaded by Brahman.

Sastram initially says, "Don’t see the world; don’t believe the eyes, they will deceive you", etc. Now what does Sastram tell us. ***“What all you see, see it as Brahman".***

At this stage he does not see this to be Dharmam, this is Adharmam; this is right or this is wrong, etc. What all he sees, he sees as Brahman. in order to see it as ***"Brahma mayam"***, how should he convert his vision? ***“Jnana mayeem kritwa"***, making his vision filled with Jnanam.

Sri Sankara says this Nididhyasaka should see this world. When we come to this stage only, we become Jeevan Mukta. No object in this world causes Moham in him, no object creates Bhayam in him, no object gives him Chanchalam. What is the reason? What all he sees, he sees as Brahma mayam, pervaded by Brahman.

One should not hasten in the beginning stages and say that I am seeing the world as Brahma Mayam. One will end up as being "Moha Mayam". In the beginning stages, one has to follow the Sadhanas of Samaha, Damaha, etc.

We would have seen the statues of the 3 monkeys. One closes its ears, another its mouth, and yet another its eyes. Mahatma Gandhi used to have such a statue. Its meaning is, "Don't see what is wrong, don't listen to what is wrong, don't speak what is wrong".This is till one has the vision to see that there is wrong in this world.

When our Drishti becomes Jnana mayam, then the world becomes Brahma Mayam. All, every body and everything is Brahma Mayam.

What we should understand here is that the eye is like a camera that takes a photo. What the camera does is that it captures the

picture. It does not do any alteration. It shows an object just as it is. There is difference between painting and photograph. In a photograph we have no choice, it will show what is "as it is". In painting we have a choice. We can draw what is not there, as in a mental projection. The eye is like a camera. It will just show what is there. A painting can be compared to the way in which we see.

A person is shown by the eye. One person sees him as Brahman, another sees him as a person who gives Sokham or as Dukha Hetu (cause for sorrow), another sees him as a person who gives Sukham or as Sukha Hetu (cause for happiness). Thus our eye is not the cause for Dukham or Sukham. The mental vision that is behind the eye, the way in which we give it a meaning or the manner in which we interpret is the real cause for Dukham or Sukham.

This Sri Sankara refers to as ***"Jnana Mayeem Kritwaa"***, making the vision Jnana Mayam. What does Jnana Mayeem mean? Jnanam that "idam Sarvam Brahma". "All this is only I the Brahman". Seeing the world with that Jnanam (knowledge) which we got from Sastram. We should see the world with this knowledge.

If we see the world without this knowledge, this world would give in us all types of positive and negative feelings. An object would give negative feeling and another would give positive feeling. But if we are with this knowledge, there is only one feeling, Sarvam Brahma Mayam. Everything is Brahma Mayam.

Then Sri Sankara says, ***"saa drishtihi parama udaaraa"***. Such vision is the highest, supreme. Parama means limitless. Seeing this world as ***"Brahma Mayam"***. People have sung, "Sarvam Brahma Mayam", "Vishnu Mayam", etc. Seeing in such a manner is ***"Paramaa udaara"***, the most supreme vision.

Beyond a stage, we need not renounce, or give up this world. We need not runaway from this world. This world itself is Brahman. We see the world as Brahma Mayam. In this stage, there is no Vivaadam or division, that this can be seen, and this cannot be seen. Or that this is eatable, and this is not eatable. What is the reason? Everything is Brahma Mayam.

That is why in Buddha's life there is a story as to how he passed away. In one of the stories, when he was eating fish, due to the fish bone he died. There is a question as to why he ate fish. At the stage, many people were following him. He wanted to go away from the crowds and he was moving incognito, doing

Sancharam. Feeling hungry, he took the food that was discarded by someone, and then he died, they say.

One might ask, is there a Niyama for a Jnani? Yes, Niyamam is there before he got Jnanam. Upon Jnana Nishtaa there is no Niyamam at all. What is the Karanam? "Everything is Brahma Mayam". But before Jnana Nishta, one should follow the Niyamas. For those who are in the ultimate stage, there is no Niyama. But for those who are in the beginning stages, all the Sadhanas apply.

Then what is the Sadhana that the Nididhyasaka does not have? ***"na naasa agra avalokinee"***. The Sadhana of seeing the tip of the nose is negated. Such a Drik Sthithi does not apply to him. Having to see the tip of the nose is not there for him. The reason is that he is seeing everything as Brahman. Sri Sankara says jocularly, he need not see the tip of the nose, it is enough if he sees the world as Brahman.

Who has to see the tip of the nose? The Sadhakas who are in beginning stages. There is no Tatparyam in seeing the tip of the nose. Bhagawan has used the word ***"swa"*** in this context, otherwise the doubt might come as to whose nose tip is to be seen. The Tatparyam is

that while sitting for Dhyanam keep your Drishrti "as if on your nose tip".

If indeed we keep seeing the nose tip we could get head ache. So also one should not see the middle of the eye lashes (Bhruu Madhye). In Dhyanam the attention should come away from the Sariram, physical body. If we were to be seeing a limb of the body, our attention would again come back to the body. Dhyanam is to separate the mind a little bit from the body and Dhyanam is to be done in the mind. There is no role for seeing an Angam of the physical body.

If so what should a Nididhysaka see? He should see this world. He need not close his eyes. He should open his eyes and see this world as Brahma Mayam.

In the next Sloka also Sri Sankara talks about "Drik Stithi", there is another concept.

<u>Drik Sthithi</u> (contd)

"Drashtu darsana drusyaanaam
viraamo yathra vaa bhaveth
Drushtis thathraiva karthavyaa
na naasaagraavalokini" .. Sl.117

"Nididhyasaka has to keep his Vision on Brahman, where there is no division of

'Seer; instrument for seeing; and seen object'. He need not see the tip of his nose", as recommended for Sadhakas in initial stages of Sadhana"

In this Sloka for Drik Stithi, Sri Sankara gives another meaning. In the previous Sloka he said, the Nididhyasaka should make his his vision Jnana Mayam and see the world as Brahman. In this Sloka he says, the effort of the Nididhyasaka should be in seeing the Brahman. Effort should not be in seeing the tip of the nose, his effort should be in seeing the Brahman.

In the previous Sloka it was seeing the world as Brahman. "Do not close the eyes, instead you see the world". If so, how to see the world? "Make your vision as Jnana Mayam and see the world as Brahman". In this Sloka, the Nididhyasaka does not come to the world at all. His lakshyam is to see the Brahman. Seeing an Angam of the body (nose tip) is not the Lakshyam.

"Let your vision be towards the Brahman, in understanding Brahman". See the world as Brahman was told in the last Sloka, here seeing Brahman is his Drik Stithi. Nididhyasaka asks where should I keep my Drik or vision? Sri Sankara's advice is keep it with Brahman.

In the last Sloka the advice was to see the world as Brahman. Here the advice is Nididhyasaka should see Brahman. How is that Brahman? It is described by Sri Sankara. Seing such a Brahman is the Drik Stithihi. Let your vison be towards Brahman.

In the last Sloka, it was said, "Let your vision be towards the world, but see it as Brahman". The Drik Stithi of Nididhyasaka is to see this world as Brahman. If one asks, how should the Drik stithi of Nididhyasaka be, it should be so as to see this world as Brahman.

In this Sloka 117, a second meaning for the Drik Stithi is given. "The seeing of Brahman is the Drik Stithi of Nididhyasaka". His vision should be oriented to seeing the Brahman; his attention should be with the Brahman. The Vishayam that he should know is Brahman. It should not be Anatma Vishayam or Aparaa Vidyaa. Without giving attention to Aparaa Vidyaa, he should give his attention to Paraa vidyaa. It is advised, "Let your vision be facing the Brahman". He should see the Brahman.

What is the Swaroopam of such Brahman? That is explained here. ***“Drashtu Darsana Drisyaanaam Viraa-maha”***: ***"Viraamaha"*** means interval. Here the meaning is ‘absence’; non-existence.

What are absent or non-existent? (i) ***"Drashtu"*** = the Seer; (ii) ***"Darsanam"*** = instrument for seeing; (iii) ***"Drisyam"*** = the object that is seen are absent in Brahman. You understand or see such a Brahman.

Here "seeing" should be taken as a common or generic word. It also refers to (i) Experiencer, (ii) instrument for experience, (iii) the object that is experienced; (i) listener, (ii) The instrument ear, (iii) The Vishyam that is heard; (i) taster, (ii) tongue, (iii) object that is tasted. These sets of three's (Triads), are called ***"Triputi"***. "Triputi" means these three types of differences.

Srishti or creation starts with Triputi. There is no Srishti without these three's. If a person is there and the world is also there, but if the instrument for experience (Anubhavam) is not there, then it is same as either the experiencer not being there or the world not being there. For example, in sleep, the experiencer is not there. Though the instrument of experience and the world are still there, there is no experience.

Thus Srishti means as minimum these three divisions should be there. How does Bhagawan create this world? (i) Kartha or experiencer: the Jada Manam becomes Chidabhasa and becomes the experiencer. Then (ii) an instrument for him and (iii) the object

that he experiences. All this is the ‘Dwaitha’ (pluralistic) world.

"Viramaha yatra vaa bhaveth": The location where the absence of these three (triputis) happens. It means ***"yathra"*** where the absence of the Srishti (creation), the absence of the "Dwaitham" happens. This is the Lakshanam for the Brahman. It is in Brahman that Dwaitham or Triputi is absent.

In Paramatma or Brahman, the above three-fold difference is absent, or disappears. As long as I am Chidabhasa or Kartha this three-fold difference is present. I am the experiencer, I have an instrument and I exerience this world. When from being a Chidabhasa, I become the Chaitanyam or Chit, with me who is such a Chaitanyam, the three fold difference is not there. The reason is- Chidabhasa is with consciousness (unarvu, **உணர்வு**). It is conscious entity but has it has ‘Vikaram’, it is suceptible to change.

I or Chaitanyam or Atma is also conscious, but is Nirvakara Swaroopam. Anatma has Vikaram and it is Jadam. Atma is Nirvikaram. In between both a Kartha (Chidabhasa) has come, who experiences. He is conscious and has the Swaroopam of Anatma. As Anatma he has Vikara Swaroopam.

"Yathra" = with that Brahman, ***"Drishtihi Karthavyaa",*** our vision should be there. We should see that Brahman.

In brief, seeing this world as Brahman (as in previous Sloka) or seeing Brahman (as in this Sloka).

In Dhyana time, Patanjali tells where our Drik Stithi should be. It is normally said that our vision should be as if we are seeing the tip of our nose. This is for a Dhyana Yogi who is in the beginning stages.

But for a Nididhyasaka, seeing the nose tip or an Angam of the body is not there. In dhyanam also this is one step. We should first keep our attention on an Angam of the body and then should give up the attention to the body. That is why the word ***"iva"***, as if seeing the nose-tip is there. This is important. Otherwise, we will be seeing the tip of the nose. If so Dhyanam would not give us the benefit, it would give us physical strain and disease. Therefore, ***"na naasa agra avalokinee drishtihi"***. Seeing the tip of the nose is not the Sadhana for a Nididhyasaka.

Where duality (plurality) disappears seeing such Brahman is the Drik Stihihi. World has several things. Nididhyasaka's Dhyanam is he

being Brahman only. This is being described by Sri Sankara in different ways.

We have seen 10 Sadhanas so far. Next 11 th Sadhana.

XI. Pranayamaha

"Chiththadi sarva bhaaveshu
brahmathvenaiva bhaavanaath
Nirodhaha sarva vriththeenaam
praanaayaamaha sa uchchyathe".. Sl.118

"In thoughts of mind (comprising Chittam, Buddhi, Manam, and Ahamkaaram), having the Bhavana (thought) of Brahman alone, and disciplining of all thoughts, is Pranayamam for the Nididhyasaka"

Next Sadhana is Pranayamaha, Prana Samyanam, disciplining or regulating or controlling Prana. We are all aware of the Sadhana, Pranayamam. This Sadhana is very important for a Sadhaka in the beginning stages.

For a student who has entered Vedanta, or one who desires to refine himself, in order to keep his body and mind healthy, in Yoga Sutra, the Sadhana of Pranayamam is given. Disciplining the Prana, making it proper. This is a Sadhana known to us.

If we intend to discipline our mind, by disciplining our Pranana we can control the mind. Disciplining Prana is one way to control the mind. We know this well. When our mind is disturbed, with excessive anger or excessive jealousy, the Prana will not function properly. If we notice our Prana when we are jealous, we will realise this. If our mind is unable to accept the glory of another person, our breath will also not function properly. Or when we are angry or when our mind is distrurbed, without our own awareness, our Prana would not function proplerly. When our mind is peaceful, calm, happy, content and full, if we observe our Prana, we can see that it is functioning properly and calmly.

Understanding this fact, to regulate our mind we undertake the Sadhana of Pranayamam. Pranayama has to be done with care. If a mistake is made in Pranayama, it will affect our mind and also the physical health of our body. Therefore, while attempting to discipline the mind that with the help of Prana, we should not give up the body. So Pranyamam has to be done with care.

Being in haste, one should not do excessive Pranayamam. One should train and practice under the guidance of a Guru/ teacher. If there is a mistake, it should be got corrected

by the teacher. Taking in breath slowly and exhaling slowly, keeping it inside for some time, is Pranayama. There are counts or timing for all these. In short, Pranayama is calming the Prana. When we calm the mind, our mind would also get calm. That is why before doing the Sadhana of Dhyanam, for a short time or for 5 or 6 times one should do Pranayamam or slow breathing, calm the mind and thereafter do Dhyanam.

This Prana is in between Manomaya kosam and Annamaya kosam. So if Prana is disciplined, the mind and the body would both be regulated. Discipline would come in Annamaya Kosam and also the Manomaya Kosam. Some diseases which are in the body would go away and the mind would also get disciplined. This is an important Sadhana for one who has to discipline the body and also the mind. Some people would not have adequate hunger and may have some other problems such as Asthma. All such body related diseases can be cured.

By doing Pranayama there are two advantages. One is that one will get good sleep. At the same time by disciplining Prana, sleep can be controlled. If one feels sleepy, if one restrains the breath for two minutes, we would become alert. Sometimes, this would be needed while attending a class. Suppose while driving,

if sleep comes suddenly, if we stop, restrain the breath for two minutes and start, we can proceed. Thus this Pranayama, is a Sadhana for regulating the body and the mind.

Now for the Nididhyasaka what is Pranayama? This is the question now. The person who has come upto the stage of Nididhyasanam has already done the practice of Pranayama and has regulated the body and the mind already. He has already regulated the mind through the Pranayama, and having got Arogyam of Annamaya Kosam, he has already done this Sadhana. So it is not required to tell him to do Pranayama.

What is the Sadhana of "Pranayama" for a Jnani? Sri Sankara tells that regulating the Prana, is not the Sadhana for him. That is Nirodham or regulating the Prana is not the Sadhana for a Jnani, but the regulation or Nirodham of the thoughts in the mind.

How is Jnani to regulate them? Using the Jnanam that is with him, he regulates the mind. He has a certain Jnanam, and with the support of that Jnanam, he regulates and disciplines all his thoughts. This is the Pranayama for Jnani.

In three Slokas, (Sl. 118, 119 and 120), Jnani’s Pranayama is explained. This is figurative. In reality, this is not Pranayama.

However, for Jnani this is the Sadhana of Pranayama.

In this Sl. 117, Sri Sankara says, stopping breath is not the Pranayama for Nididhyasaka, instead it is stopping the flow of the thoughts in the mind. Stopping here means regulating or disciplining them or calming them. (neri padutthuthal, **நெறி படுத்துதல்**). How? With the support or association of the Jnanam that he has. In the first line he indicates the Jnanam. With this Jnanam doing this is Pranayama. This Lakshanam cannot be seen anywhere else, it is given here alone. It is not true that this is Pranayama. But, for Jnani this is Pranayama.

“chiththadi sarva bhaaveshu brahmatvenaiva bhaavanaat” : ***"Chitta"*** means the imprint or Vasanas in the mind, ***"adi"*** means etc. By the word ***"adi"***, Manam, Buddhi, and Ahamkaaram, these 3 are also included. Chittam, Buddhi, Manam, Ahamkaaram, all these are our Sushma Sariram, or Manam only. That part of Manam that is with feeling we call it as Manam; the thoughts that decide we call Buddhi; the imprint of what is already experienced we call as Chittam; and the thought that takes this Anatma or body as "I" (Aham) as Ahamkaaram. All these 4 types of thoughts, we call ***"chittadi sarva bhaavaha"***.

In all these objects that is our Manam, ***"brahmatwena eva bhaavanaat"*** –having the Bhavana (thought) of Brahman alone.

If Brahman is not behind the Manam, Manam will not have the status of Manam at all. Our eye gets the status of eye because "I" am seeing from behind it. If we go to museum and see, the eyes of the figures will be better than ours. Yet we do not call them as eyes, reason being that they cannot see us. Any figure that is in museum, either men or animals, cannot see like us. Our eyes are able to see because Atma is behind them, Atma Swaroopam does Anugraham (blesses) to them.

Thus with the back up of Brahman, Manam, Chittam, Buddhi and Ahamkaaram, are able to work or function. With the Bhaavana that Brahman is behind these, [that is with the support of Atma Jnanam], in line 2, ***"sarva vritteenaam nirodhaha"***; the Nirodham (disciplining, regulating) of all thoughts, ***"pranayamaha saha uchyate",*** that alone is said to be Pranayamam for the Nididhyasaka.

Pranayama for Nididhyasaka means regulating the thoughts in the mind with the help of Jnanam that is in the mind. Regulating the Prana is not for him, let it be in whatever manner. The reason is that he has already regulated his Prana. What he has to regulate or discipline is his thoughts.

In this Sloka, he tells briefly, that regulating the Prana is not the Pranyamam. Regulating, disciplining the thoughts in the mind is the Pranayama for him. The general Lakshnam for Pranayama is given here.

The regulating Pranayama for the thoughts is of 3 types, just as the normal Pranayama is of 3 types. In the next 2 Slokas, Sl. 119 & 120, he explains that Jnani practices this Pranayama in three ways. These 3 types of Pranayamam are explained.

<u>Pranayamaha</u> (contd)

"Nishedanam prapanchasya
rechakaakhyaha sameeranaha
Brahmaivaasmeethi saa vriththihi
poorako vaayureerithaha" .. Sl.119

"Thathah tad vriththi naischalyam
kubhakaha praana samyamaha
Ayam chaapi prabudhaanaam
ajnaanam ghraanapeedanam" .. Sl.120.

"For a Nididhyasaka, negating this world as mithya/ unreal' is said to be Rechaka Pranayama. The thought I am Brahman is Pooraka Pranayama. Retaining the thought that 'I am Brahma Swaroopam' inside without it going away is Kumhbhaka Pranayama".

"All these Pranayamas are for a Jnani. But for Ajnanis, Pranayama continues to be disciplining of the breath (Prana)"

The common, simple Sadhana of “Pranayama”, is done in 3 parts or Amsams. Releasing Prana (breathing out of air which is inside) is one Amsam (called Rechaka); breathing in or taking Prana which is outside inwards is another Amsam (called Pooraka). Then retaining or keeping the breath inside is another Amsam (called Kumbhaka). Thus there are these 3 Amsams in Pranayama.

The Pranayama that gives importance to the exhaling Amsam is called ‘Rechaka Pranayama’. Here the importance is for exhaling the breath. That is, more time is given for exhaling the breath. That is the breath is given out for a long time, slowly. Importance is not there for taking the breath in and for retaining the breath. Their ratio would be less. If take 10 seconds for giving out the breath, we may take 3 seconds for retaining and 5 seconds for taking in the breath. The term for exhaling is ‘Rechakam’ or ‘emptying the air that is inside out’’ or Rechaka Pranayama. In this Pranayama the importance is for exhaling, to give out the impure air that is inside. Air that is outside is naturally pure, and when it goes inside our body it becomes impure.

Man seems to be the only being which pollutes the air. Otherwise everything was alright. The trees are there to purify the air and balance. We are born and even if we breathe we seem to pollute the air. We say that we are beautifying this world. But, right from our birth we are polluting and corrupting the world.

Thus as soon breath goes in, pure air becomes impure. What we do then is to send it out. This is Rechakam. This is one Amsam.

Next we breathe in and fill in air. This is called Poorakam. Pooraka Pranayama means giving importance to filling in air. Breathing out quickly and then breathing in air slowly. This breathing in air is slightly difficult, like eating food slowly. Doing Pranayamam giving importance to Poorakam is Pooraka Praanayaam. Pooraka here means taking in good air inside. We give out ‘mala vaayu’ and breath in pure air.

Then the third Amsam, Kumbhakam. Here, importance is for retaining the air, without taking in the breath or giving out the breath. This is called Kumbhakam. In Kumbhaka Pranayama the importance is for the amount of time that we are retaining the air inside. Having taken in the pure air inside, how long are we keeping the air inside.

Thus Pranayama is of 3 types, each giving importance to each Amsam. There are calculations for all these. One could give equal duration for each of them or one could give importance to any one of them. All these are difficult. Instead it is simple to breathe in and breathe out. If we do not do as per calculation, it could lead to problems. One has to be careful with respect of Pranayama. Otherwise, many had their brain affected, had loss of apetite, and have lost their lives. So, one has to do Pranayama carefully. If one wishes to do carefully there is definite benefit due to this.

In the beginning, one could do Pranayama slowly, in a limited way. It has definite benefits.

Now, what type of Pranayama should a Jnani do?
In line 1, Sri Sankara takes the Rechaka Pranayama. In this Rechaka Pranayama importance is for exhaling the impure air which is inside. For Ajnani exhaling the impure air is Rechaka. What is Rechakam for Jnani?

Sri Sankara tells beautifully. ***"Nisheda-nam prapanchasya" -*** negating this world. Prapancham itself is negated as ***'it is mithya / unreal'***, it is not required. It is not Nishedanam of the air for him. ***"Prapanchasya Nishedanam"*** – removing the Prapancham itself. That it is false, Asuddham, it is not real

and sending it out. ***"Prapanchasya Nishedanam Rechaka Aakhyaha"*** - ***"negating this world is said to be Rechaka Pranayama"***. (‘Sameeranaha' means Vayuhu or Prana).

For a Jnani, the "negation/ removal of the world" is the Sadhana of Recaka Pranayama. That is Ajnani keeps exhaling the breath. But, the Jnani has already done this Sadhana, so he need not do this. For him, it is negating the Prapancham itself as Mithya/ unreal.

Next Poorakam. With what will the Jnani do the Pooraka Pranayama? In line 2, ***"brahma aham asmi iti ya vritti"*** –with ***"the thought I am Brahman"***. This is Pooraka Pranayama for a Nididhyasaka.

In normal Pooraka Pranyama one breathes in and fills in with good air. But, a Jnani breathes in with the thought ***"brahma asmi iti" –"brahma eva aham asmi iti"***. Taking such thoughts is said to be Pooraka Pranayama. Pooraka Pranayama is to take up the thought ***‘aham brahma asmi’***.

Removing Prapancham means removing the thought ***‘aham sareeraha’***. I am this Sareeram or I have this Sareeram.

"aham brahma eva asmi", the thought that appears as ‘ I am brahman’ filling the mind with such a thought.

Removing the thoughts from the mind that the world is Satyam and filling it with the thought that I am Brahman. This is said to be Pooraka Pranayama.

Now you can guess what is called Kumbhaka Pranayama. Retaining and protecting the thought ***"aham brahma asmi"***. This is stated in next Slokam.

"Tataha tad vritti naischalayam kumbhaka"- In normal Kumbhakam we take in pure air and keep it inside/ retain it safely. So also we have taken in the vritti ***"aham brahma"***, and keeping the thought that ***"I am brahma swaroopam"*** inside without Chalanam (naishcalyam). Keeping it inside without it going away. Keeping/ retaining such thought is Kumhbhaka Prana Samyamaha. Samyamaha means regulation, Prana Samyamaha means Pranayama.

For Jnani, Kumbhaka Pranyama is to retain "aham brahma" thought.

Removing the thought that world is Sathyam is Rechakam, taking in the thought

"aham brahma" is Poorakam, and retaing the knowledge that "aham brahma" is Kumbhakam.

"ayam cha api prabuddhaanaam" – all these Pranayamas are for a Jnani. ***"ajnanaam ghraana peedanam"***: But for Ajnanis, Pranayama continues to be "torturing or hurting" (peednam) of the breath (ghraanam). Causing harm to the breath is Pranayama for Ajnanis.

Breath is going in and out as per its rhythm just like a child playing as per its will. Suppose a person catches the child and disturbs it. So also, the Ajnani catches the Prana that is going in and out as per its rhythm, and causes it Peedanam or disturbance. Giving Kashtam to breathing. Left to itself, the child will keep playing and will not attend school. But we restrict its movement and put it in discipline. This regulation we give to the child. So also, without allowing the Prana in its way, we give it a Sramam, and regulate it or discipline it.

All this is for Ajnanaam, for Ajnaanis. What type of Pranayama should we do? We only have to decide. If we are Jnanis, we have to do the Pranayama as told here. If we are Ajnanis, we have to keep disciplining our Prana.

For Jnanis, Pranayama is to to remove this world as Mithya (பொய்). We need not exhale just the air, we 'exhale' it along with even Akasam. He removes everything in the world as unreal. Then he takes in the thought 'aham brahma' and retains that thought inside. This is Jnani's Sadhana of Pranayamha.

Next Sadhana in next sloka- 121.

<u>XII. Pratyaharaha</u>

"Vishayeshu aathmathaam drishtvaa
Manasas chiti majjanam
Pratyaahaaraha sa vijneyaha
abhyasaneeyo mumukshubhihi" .. Sl 121

"Seeing one's own self in all the objects that are being experienced and submerging the mind in Chaitanya Atma is the Sadhana of Pratyaharam. This should be practiced by Jnanis""

Next is the 12 th Sadhana, 'Pratyaaharaha'. In Yoga Sutra, Patanjali has given 'Pratyaaharaha'. Pratyaahaaraha is what we call in Vedanta as Damaha, regulation of Indriyas. We will see the normal meaning for this Sadhana first and then we will see what Pratyahaaram is for Jnani.

‘aahaaram’ means food. The Sthula (gross) food is given to the Sthula Sariram (gross body). The food, ***‘aahaaram’*** for Manam is given through the 5 Indriyas or senses. Foods for the eyes are sights and scenes; food for ears are sabdam, music, etc.; food for tongue is tastable items, etc. In this context, ***'aahaaram"*** is the "food"/vishaya that is given to the five senses."

"Pratyaahaaram" (Prati aahraam) means not giving food or regulating the food/ aahaaram to the Manam / Indriyas/ senses. It means disciplining of the Indriyas. It is "not seeing" something which we see for the sake of pleasure alone. It is "not hearing" something which when we hear for the sake of pleasure alone. "Not tasting such food" which we taste for the sake of pleasure only. In essence, "Pratyaahaaraha" means not allowing the mind to go out through the five Indriyas, for the sake of peasure.

It is a Vratam (penance) that is followed by the senses. In this Vratam, what type of ‘food’ should not be given? Whatever Vishayam would result in Moham, Krodham, Lobham, etc., not giving such Vishayams to the Manam. Not giving the senses or Indriyas the corresponding Vishyas or objects.

In Vedanta (Saadhana Chathushtayam), this Saadhana is called as 'Damaha'. It is discipling of the Indriyas (indriya kattuppaadu இந்த்ரிய கட்டுபாடு) or senses. Indriyas keep on asking for Vishayams. The eyes want to see scenes and sights; ears want to keep on listening to something. Tongue wants to continue to taste something. Thus, we keep on feeding the mind through one sense or the other.

If we see an elephant it keeps on eating at all the times. That is its Swabhaavam or nature. Thus there is always a demand of food for the Indriyas. Later at some stage, the Indriyas become weak. When Indriyas fail, if one cannot give 'food' through the senses, then the mind will be languishing and feel depressed. That is why, even before the Indriyas lose their Sakthi or power, we should discipline the Indriyas. We should get physical and mental health or Arogyam. If we do not do Pranayama, our physical body would not get health. So also if we do not have Indriya discipline or Damaha our mind will not get mental health.

So if we desire good health for body and mind, we should give good Vishayams through the Indriyams. And bad Vishayams should not be given. The Mukhyatwam (importance) is not so much for giving good Vishayams. Whether

you are able to give good Vishayams or not, don’t give bad Vishsayams or garbage. Whether you keep the house clean or not, don’t put in garbage. So also, those Vishayams that spoil the body and mind should not be given to the Indriyams. This is the normal meaning for the Sadhana of Pratyaharam that was given by Patanjali. It is restricting Vishyams from Indriyas.

Parents tell their children, "Till you complete the exams don't see TV". Thus we keep some control on ourselves. This is the normal meaning. If one experiences Vishayams excessively (beyond limits) or if we see Vishayam itself for a low level happiness (experience), there is the need to do the Sadhana of Pratyaahaaram or Damaha.

There is a Niyathi (rule) that a Sadhaka should see this, or that he should not see that. He should listen to this, he should not listen to that. He can go here, he should not go there, etc. This is the Sadhana of Pratyahaaram or Damaha or Vishaya Adarsanam (not seeing Vishayam or objects).

Now what is Pratyaahaaram for Jnani? If we get a Jnanam whereby what all we see or listen is known to be Brahma Swaroopam, if whatall we see is seen as Brahman, in that case it has no relevance to say that one should not

see Vishayam. The reason is that what all I see is Brahma swaroopam. All the vishayams are Brahma Swaropam. Or all the Vishayams are "I only". "Idam Sarvam Ahameva".

Let us see an example for Damaha. When we speak with a person, suppose we experience anger. So what should we do, we should not go near him. When proximity of a certain object or relationship with a person does not give you (nanmai, நன்மை) good result, you avoid it.

But in the case of a Brahma Jnani, whatever, whomever he sees is seen to be his own self; he thinks he is seeing himself; he has no type of difference (Vetrumai, வேற்றுமை); no object gives him Moham (delusion), he sees himself only; all the Vishayams become himself.

This is a very subtle concept (aspect). Sri Sankara speaks here from the highest, peak level. If all the seen objects become oneself, what Pratyaaahaaram is there for Nididhyasaka? There is no Pratyaaahaaram for him at all. For him Pratyaaahaaram is not 'Vishaya Adarsanam' (not seeing Vishayams), or not giving Vishayam to Indriyams. It is but seeing those Vishayams as himself. It is "seeng the Vishayams as Atma", or "seeing the Vishayams as Brahman”.

Either you don’t see them ('Vishaya Adarsanam'), or see them as Brahman.If we are unabe to see them as Brahman, then we have to distinguish or divide them as ‘these I should see’ and ‘these I should not see.’ What we should see, we should see. And what we should not see, we should not see.

If we are able to see everything as Brahman, then what all we see is Iswara swaroopam. It is for this knowledge (arivu, **அறிவு**) for which Bhagawan Sri Krishna spends two Adhyayams (10th and 11th Chapters) in Bhagawad Gita. What is the reason (Karanam)? What all you see, see it as my (Iswara) Swaroopam. Nothing should be an object for Moham, Krodham, etc.

Some people say as soon as I see him, I get anger (erichchal, **எறிச்சல்**). Some people get angry as soon as they think of another person. They say as soon as I think of another I get BP. The reason is that we have divided the Vishayams as such. If so, 'don’t see' (parkaathe, **பார்க்காதே**); 'don’t speak' (pesaa-the, **பேசாதே**); 'don’t think' (ninaikkaathe, **நினைக்கா தே**).

But Jnani is able to see all, everything as Brahman. Jnani when he sees this world with Jnanam, he should see himself. That is the

Pratyaahaaram for him. At such a stage, he should not say that I should see this and I should not see that. In this stage, when he opens his eyes and sees, he should see everything as himself. This is the ultimate, final stage. This should not be done in the beginning itself.

Some people who are in the initial stages think that they are Jnanis, and think that "I can see anything, I can eat anything, I can listen to anything." If one thinks so, one would not be successful.

Here Sri Sankara says ***"vishayeshu atmataam drishtwaa"***: '***Vishayeshu'*** = in the objects that are being experienced; '***atmataam drishtwaa'***= seeing himself / oneself, seeing that it is himself, seeing one's own swaroopam in all the objects that are being seen; ***'manasaha chiti majjanam*** = submerging the mind in Chaitanya Atma (**மனதை அந்த சைதன்ய ஆத்மாவிடத்தில் முழுக வைத்தல்**, manathai antha Chaitanya atmaa-vidaththil muzhugavaiththal).

Just as a wave understands itself to be water, and undestands "I am the water in all the waves", so also this Jnani sees himself in all the places and objects and ***'manasaha Chiti majjanam,*** submerges his mind in Chaitanyam.

In the beginning stages, it was Vishaya Majjanam. He was getting submerged in Vishayam, in objects. Now through Jnanam, realizing/ knowing/ feeling/ understanding that he is Atma always, he gets submerged in that Chaitanya Atma.

If a bee sees a pot full of honey, it flies fast and goes and sits in the middle. If goes to taste one drop of honey only, but it gets submerged in the honey and loses its life. It did not go with the intention of getting submerged in the honey. It went just for a little bit.

So also a man takes a Vishayam intending to experience it only a little. But he falls in that Vishsayam and he gets submerged. Vishayam sucks him in and Vishayam then finishes him. That is why we say, ‘He first eats the food, then the food eats him’. What is the meaning? All diseases form on account of that food, diseases take hold of his body and eat him.

Here ***Chiti majjanam***= Jnani submerges in Chaitanyam. Just as the Paamaras / the ignorant get submerged in Vishayam, in the same manner this Jnani gets submerged in Chaitanyam.

'Saha Pratyaahaaraha jneyaha'=this should be known to be Pratyaahaaram. ***'Abhyasaneeyaha mumukshubhihi'***= this

should be practiced by Mumukshus, by one who has got Jnanam.

A Jnani (Mumukshu) who is interested in Jnana Nishta, should practice this again and again. That is he should see this world as himself. ‘In this world, I alone am as every Jiva'. Here seeing the Vishayams is like seeing oneself in the mirror. 'All these are the Pratibimbam or reflection of myself, who is Atma'. ‘I myself am in them also'. Such a practice should be done by him. That is he should see this world with Jnanam.

Each and every object that is seen should be seen as ones own Swaroopam or Atma Swaroopam and he should submerge in such knowledge.

In the next Sloka the 13 th Sadhana.

XIII. Dharana

"Yathra yathra mano yaathi
brahmanah thathra darsanaath
Manaso dhaaranam chaiva
dhaaranaa saa paraa mathaa" .. Sl.122

"Wherever the mind goes, seeing that as Brahman is the Dharana for Nididhyasaka. Such a Dharana is superior"

The next Sadhana mentioned by Sri Sankara is Dharanaa. It means focusing the mind. This is a word that is used by Patanjali in Ashtanga Yoga. We see the normal meaning of this Sadhana and then see what Dharana is for a Nididhyasaka.

Through Pratyaaharam or Damaha, we take the Manam which is going outward and keep (retain) it inside. Without engaging in Vishayas which are not required, we don't send the mind outward through the Indriyas. Just as we lock the gate, we have to lock our Indiryas so that our Manas does not go out. We prevented the mind from going out through the Indriyas. Now our Manas is inside. Next what are we to do with such a mind? Focussing the mind on the selected Lakshaym on which we wish to focus the mind and directing the attention of the mind to that Lakshaym is Dhaaranaa.

Taking a Lakshyam or goal, keeping the Manam in that Lakshyam is called Dharana. ***‘eka lakshye manasaha sthaapanam’*** is the Lakshanam for Dharana. Directing the mind to a Lakshyam is Dharana.

Dharana means taking the mind that is going outward and redirecting to a Lakshyam. Taking a Nischayam or decision we give an instruction to the mind. "May you do this!’’

"May you think of this!" "This is what I should think". "In this Lakshyam only my mind should be engaged". Thus engaging the Manam in a Lakshyam is Dhaarana.

The Saadhana of Dhaarana that we are now seeing and the next Sadhanas of Dhyanam and Samadhi are quite close to one another. That is why in Ashtanga Yoga all these three Sadhanas come together as Antaranga Saadhana.

Dharana is to take a Lakshyam and focus our Manam on that Lakshyam. It should be a single Lakshyam. Taking one Lakshyam and one should focus on that Lakshyam only.

When we open our eyes we see many objects. If we go to a shop, we see different types of objects. In Dharana we arrest all the objects and keep Manam in one Lakshyam. Manam should not go to another place or object. Making it go to just one location is Dharana.

This is the Sadhana that should be done by the Mumukshus who are in the initial stages. But what is Dharana for the Nididhyasaka?

Indeed, when we become a Nididhyasaka, Sastra gives us a lot of freedom. When we are in the primary school, we have to go in time to

the school. Otherwise the teacher would make us stand outside. There is time discipline. But when one becomes a Ph.D. reseach scholar, the approach itself changes. If the scholar comes late he will not be made to stand outside. He may come when he likes and he may go when you likes. He is given the freedome. He can work from his house or anywhere.

Such a freedom is being given to the Nididhyasaka. He is told, ‘You need not focus your mind in one place. Let the mind go wherever, you need not run after it, catch it, bring it back, etc. Let the mind go anywhere. This is the maximum freedom that can be gven.

In Dharana of an initial Sadhaka, one should not let the mind go anywhere else. We catch the mind and keep it focussed on the Lakshyam. For a Nididhyasaka, the Dharana is whatever the mind thinks, let it think.

Then Sri Sankara says ***"yatra yatra mano yaathi"*** wherever the mind goes, whatever the mind thinks, ***"tatra brahmanaha darsanaat"*** =see all that as Brahman. You do not have to block the mind and do the Sadhana as told by Patanjali. Wherever the mind goes, let it go. But may you see that as Brahman. It should not be Vishaya Drishti, but let it be Brahma Drishti. You should see as Brahman or Atma.

The Sadhana of Dharana as stated by Patanjali is "not diverting the mind to Vishayas" and "turning the mind and keeping it in one place or Lakshyam". For Nididhyasaka, Dharana is "Wherever the mind goes, seeing that as Brahman". "Seeing everything as Brahman". ***"Manasaha Dharanam cha eva"***, this is the Dharana for the Nididhyasaka.

This is the single pointedness of Manam. The Dharana or keeping the mind in one location for Nididhyasaka is: "There is no restriction for him, it is seeing Brahman in all the locations to which the mind goes. Then Sri Sankara says ***"saa Dharanaa paraa mataa"***. Such a Dharana is the highest or superior Dharana.

In the other Dharana, we cause trouble for the mind in trying to keep it in one place. We catch the mind that is freely roaming, like a bird being caught and kept in a cage. "You should go here only, you should do this only", etc. We cause Kashtam to it. But in Nididhyasaka's Dharana we leave it free, and behind the mind we keep this Jnanam. What Jnanam? "Whatever is seen is Brahman". "With whomever we speak, all of them is Brahman". "If some people scold us, that is scolding Brahman". "If some one praises me that is the praising Brahman". "The Brahman that is scolding us, after some time, it could become

the praising Brahman". "If some people ill treat us, that is ill-treating Brahman".

We have to take like that. In everything include that Brahman. What is all these? All these are in the Anatma level. Whatever and what all we think only Brahman is there. This is ***"paraa mataa".***

This is the 13 th Sadhana. Next is Dhyanam the 14 th Sadhana.

XIV. Atma Dhyanam

"Brahmaiva asmeethi sad vriththya niraalambanathayaa sthithihi Dhyaana sabdena vikhyaathaa Paramaananda daayinee" .. Sl.123

"Being with the true thought 'I am Brahman', without any other support is said to be Dhyanam for the Nididhyasaka. It gives supreme Anandam".

The next Sadhana is called Dhyanam.

After the Sadhana of Dharana, Patanjali also talks about Dhyanam. It is the practice of keeping the mind in the Vishayam that we have selected. The Sadhana of Dhyanam comes naturally as the next step to Dharana.

In Dharana we caught the mind that is going outside and fixed it in one Lakshyam. This fixing is Dharana. Thereafter, practising to keep the mind in that Lakshyam is Dhyanam. Taking the Vishaya is Dharanaa and staying put In that Vishayam is Dhyanam. Focussing the mind is Dharana and the practice of keeping the mind in the Vishsaya selected is Dhyanam. Thinking of Lakshyam again and again (repeatedly) is Dhyanam. Whatever we wish to think of, thinking of it continuously is Dhyanam.

Deciding that this is what we should think of and keeping the mind in it is Dharana. We are seeing and thinking of an Anatma which is outside. Taking that mind and keeping it in one Namam (name) of Bhagawaan is Dharana. Then keeping, retaining the mind in that Naama of Bhagawan with effort and repeating that name is Dhyanam. The Karanam or cause that there are many types of Dhyanam is that we have of many types of Lakshyams.

If we take a “Value’ and meditate upon it, it is called ‘Value Meditation’. If we take a Naama of Iswara and meditate upon it, it becomes ‘Japa Roopa Dhyanam’. When we do Dhyanam in such a manner, what happens normally is that beyond whatever we desire to meditate upon, without our effort we will get thoughts that we do not desire to think of.

In Japa Dhyanam, we decide that the first thought should be Bhagawan's Namam, second thought should be Bhagawan's Namam, third thought should be Bhagawan's Namam, etc. Thus during the Japa Dhyanam of some 20 minutes, all the thoughts should be same. In that 20 minutes, we expect a single thought only. But, in 20 minutes many other thoughts would come and go in between.

The Vishayam for all the thoughts should be one only. That should be the Namam that we have chosen. That may be "Namo Narayanaya" or "Namah Sivaya" or any other. But when we choose thus and do Dhyanam, we will know that we get many unwanted thoughts. If we decide that we would do Dhyanam of Bhagawan's Naamam 108 times, we would get 108 other different thoughts in between the first Namam and the second Naamam. All these thoughts come and go beyond our effort. All these are unwanted thoughts.

These are called Vijaatheeya Vritti. Vijaatheeya Vritti means thoughts that we do not want in Dhyanam. Sajaatheeya Vritti means those thoughts that we desire to meditate upon at that time. Dhyanam is a type of effort. That effort is to remove Vijaatheeya Vritti with the help of Sajaatheeya Vritti. This effort is called Dhyaanam. Some people complain that while

doing Dhyanam unwanted thoughts come. It is because different thoughts come, it is called Dhyanam. If different thoughts do not come it is not Dhyanam. It is the next Sadhana that Patanjali calls Samaadhi.

When we sit for Dhyanam, the thought (Lakshyam) that we have decided to do Dhyanam upon, that thought alone should come. But, in the Sadhana of Dhyanam, unwanted thoughts would come. What should we do? Withought getting upset, we should tell with love, "Alright you please go and send the thought of Lakshyam. That is why, only when we reduce the anger with external agencies, the anger against ourselves would reduce. We are feeling anger with ourselves. Our habit of dealing with others tends to come also to ourselves.

Before going for Dhyanam we should not think "I am going to do a very major Sadhana, namely Dhyanam". We should feel that we are gong to play with our mind for a short while. What is the game? "I will think of something (Lakshyam). The mind will think of something else. I will push that thought away and will think of the Lakshyam". If we go with such a relaxed mind, we would not feel that Dhyanam is a heavy Sadhana.

Dhyanam means removing the unwanted thoughts and pursuing the desired thoughts. There are many types of Dhyanams. All the Dhyanams that are done before ‘Jnanam’ (Self knowledge) are indeed called Upasanam. It could be any Dhyanam.

Some very catchy and attractive names are given for Dhyanam, with the intention that one would get attracted and do the Dhyanam at least then. We call all Dhyanams as Upasanam. All these are the Dhyanams for the Ajnani (the ignorant).

Now what is the Dhyanam for a Nididhyasaka? Here it is not taking a Naamam and keeping the mind in that Sabdam (sound). It is not taking a form, and mind seeing in that form. It is not taking a value and thinking of that value alone. It is not taking an Angam (limb) of the body and focusssing mind on that.

Instead it is a type of thought. That is thought is the Jnanam/ knowledge that has been obtained from the Pramanam of Upanishad. It is continuation of that Jnanam. Keeping that Jnanam in the mind is Nididhyasanam, or Dhyanam.

What is that Jnanam? Sri Sankara describes it. ***“Brahma eva asmi ithi”, ”I am Brahman"***.

"How am I?". That is the question. We never ask a person if he/ she is there? It is obvious that the person is there. The question that we ask is, "How are you"? Even when we know for sure that the person is not well, yet we ask. Immediately that person's 'Atma Puranam' will come. He wil start saying initially that he is well, which comes as a matter of formality or course. But if we persist, then all his Samsaram, difficulties will be expressed. The core point is, what is the nature of that person?

In Nididhyasanam, the thought is ***"Brahma eva asmi"; "I am full, Poornam, as Brahman".*** Sri Sankara gives a Lakshanam for this thought, ***"Iti sat vrityaa"***. The thought ***"Brahma eva asmi", " I am as Brahman",*** that thought is called ***"sat vritti"***. ***"sat vritti"*** means this thought alone is the true thought. All the other thoughts that we are thinking about ourselves, they are 'false thoughts", ***"asat vritti"***. How?

We go and ask a person, "How are you"? Let us say at that moment he is unwell and has stomach ache. He will say I am suffering very much. He has the thought, "I am in great difficulty". After some time, the stomach ache goes totally. He is eating 7 or 8 Parottas which

are before him. We ask him now, "How are you"? He will say “I am very happy”.

The Vritti that he stated a shortwhile ago, that he is suffering, he is unhappy is not ***"sat vritti"***. It is a false thought. Why? He himself has negated it. In another one hour he is also going to negate the happy Vritti which he expressed now. The 7 or 8 parottaa that he has eaten will affect his stomach. He will then state that he is not well. So that the Vritti that he is happy now is also ***"asad vritti"*** only. The reason is that for his present happiness the Parotta is the cause.

Thus, all the judgements that we have in our mind about us, all those are ***"asad vritti"***. This is a very subtle concept. If we were to understand this concept, we would not complain at all that others are thinking about us in this or that manner. What is the reason? Even what we are thinking about ourselves is false (‘poy’, **பொய்**). Such being the case, how can what someone else is thinking about me be true?

Thus what all I may be thinking about me, none of them are ***"sad vritti"***. All of them are ***"asad vritti",*** as I myself am going to negate that thought. Thus what all, any body might have concluded about me, all of them are false

(poy, பொய்), ***"asad vritti"***. Karanam is that they are all susceptible to change.

But this one Vritti, thought, ***"I am Brahman"*** is unchangeable. That alone is called ***"sad vritti"*** here by Sri Sankara. That is the true thought about yourself. What is the right judgement about ourselves? ***"I am Poornaha", "I am full"***.

But this judgement cannot be taken by us, till our mind has Abhimanam in Anatma (body). As soon as we negate the Anatma and know ourself as Atma, that thought is the ***"sad vritti".*** Another Lakshanam for ***"sad vritti"*** is ***"abaadhita vritti". "abahadhita vritti"*** means the Vritti that cannot be negated by any other Pramanam. ***"Pramanaantara baadha ayogya vritti"***. It cannot be negated by another Pramanam. ***"aham Brahma" Vritti,*** none can falsify this.

But, when I am saying that I am Brahman, if another person comes and says that "You are not Brahman". "Who is he to say that I am not Brahman"? "He has the right to say that he is not Brahman. Whoever has the right to say that I am not Brahman? Only I have the right to say that I am or I am not".

What does Dwaita philosophy say? It says "You are not Brahman". If some one is giving

Upadesam that "You are not Brahman", we say that "Only I have to state if I am Brahman or not".

After giving the treatment and claiming that he has given the treatment, doctors ask us, "How are you?", for only we have to state if we are well or not. So also, "whether I am Brahman or not with which Pramanam should I conclude"?

With the help of such ***"sad vritti"*** that ***"aham Brahmasmi stithihi"*** which means 'being' with such right thought; ***"dhyaana sabdena vikhyaathaa"*** is explained /stated by the word 'Dhyanam'.

Thus the Sadhana Dhyanam in this context is being with the true knowledge ***-"I am as Poorna Brahman"***. We need not do anything else here. It is just enough if we are with this knowledge/ thought.

We should not go and ask a question to such a person. What are you doing "by just being"? After the statement "I am just being" (summa irukkiren, **சும்மா இருக்கிறேன்**) there is no scope for the question, "What are you doing?"

There is another word in between, ***"niraalambanathayaa"***. ***"aalambanam"***

means an object/ support that we use for Dhyanam. To be able to do the Sadhana of Dhyanam, we need and use the support or aid. It is called "Alambanam". That support or aid can be of Sabdam (or sound), or can be Roopam (a form, shape). If use Siva lingam or the form of Dakshinaamoorthy or the Chinmudra, we can take such Roopam in the mind and keep observing the same. Or keeping the Sabdam such as "Om Namah Sivaaya" or "Om Narayanaaya" in the mind, and without allowing another thought, we can do Dhyanam. This support is called “Alambanam’. The Namam or Roopam of God or any such thing we keep as support. With the help of that support, we keep our mind in one Vishayam and practice.

But this Dhyanam of Nididhyasaka is ***"Niraalambanam"***. That is there is no ***"saguna alambanam"***. There is no sound or form as aid. That is being without any Alambanam or support. This is like being in the outer space. If so, in what thought will the mind be? It will be with the thought ***"aham Poornaha".***

That is, for "Atma Dhyanam" the Alambanam is "Atma" only. Really, we should not call this an Alambanam. Alambanam means the object for Dhyanam. Here the subject for Dhyanam is “Atma”. "I myself am the

Alambanam". It is like seeing ourself, without the aid of an external Vishayam, with this knowledge itself as the support or Alambanam or Vishayam. It is being in that knowledge. This is the Dhyanam.

Nididhyasaka's Dhyanam is being with the ***"sad vritti", "true thought" - "I am as Brahman".*** As long as we are with this thought (even if for few seconds), we are doing Nididhyasanam.

Alright, when we are with this thought, how will our mind be? ***"parama ananda daayinee"*** –while we are with this thought, what comes in our mind is supreme anandam. That is why, Dhyana Kaalam and Dhyana Phalam are said to be simultaneous ('Sama Kalam'). Dhyana Kaalam and Kalam when Dhyana Phalam is experienced are 'same time' in Nididhyasanam.

After doing the Dhyanam that "I am Poornam", we should not ask when wil I get the phalam. The very Dhyanam that "I am Poornaha" itself is the Phalam. The reason is that at that time we are experiencing the Dhyana Phalam. Doing the Dhyanam and the experiencing of the Dhyana Phalam are simultaneous. They happen at the same time. That is why ***"Parama Ananda Daayinee"***. ***"daayinee"*** means that this Dhyanam gives,

"Parama Anandam", supreme Anandam. What are the others? They are "Alpa Anandam". They give happiness for a short while, they gives happiness at that time only. Then the happiness goes away. This Nididhyasana Dhyanam, ***"sthithihi"*** being in this manner, ***"sad vrittyaa"*** with the help of true knowledge, with the knowledge ***"Brahma eva asmi ithi"*** is ***"Parama Ananda Dayinee"***.

Here there is no struggle or play that Vijaatheya thought should not come, etc. We are with "I am Brahman" thought. If at all, if we slip with "Vipareetha Bhavanaa", we may slip definitely, then we bring this "Sad Vritti" (true thought) again.

[In other Dhyanams if we slip and go to other Vishayams, we come back to "Saguna Alambanam]. But here if we slip and go to other Vishayams, again we come to the "Sad Vritti", "Aham Brahma Asmi".

This is the Nididhyasaka's Dhyanam. This is the 14 th Sadhana.

In the next Slokam, the final 15 th Sadhana.

XV. Samadhihi

"Nirvikaarathayaa vrithyaa

Brahmaakaarathayaa punaha
Vriththi vismaranam samyak
Samaadhir Jnaana samjnayakaha"
..Sl.124

"Having a Vritti which has no change and Which is of the nature "I am Brahman", and forgetting the dualities such as "I am the Dhyaata", "this is the Vishayam for Dhyanam", & "now I am doing Dhyanam" is Samadhi which is of the name of Jnanam".

15 th and final Sadhana is Samaadhihi. This is a well known (Prasiddha) Sadhana in Yoga Sastram. This word is known to those who have come into Sastram.

It is also known to people who have not come to Sastram, but the meaning that they understand from the word Samadhi is different. They refer to the the construction that is done when a person dies, also as Samadhi. Also when a Mahatma dies, one says he has attained Samadhi.

The Sadhana of Samadhi stated by Patanjali has the Lakshanam ***"Dhyaana Paripakaha Samaadhi"***. After practicing if the Dhyanam happens effortlessly then it is called Samadhihi. It is the maturity or culmination of Dhyanam, the advanced state of Dhyanam is

Samaadhi. So Samadhi is not a Sadhana that we practice separately. If we continue to do Dhyanam, the maturity or culmination of such Dhyanam is 'Samadhi'. The final stage of Dhyanam is Samadhi. Being in that stage is Samadhi.

Being in that Vishayam/ taking a Vishayam is Dharana; practicing to stay put in the Vishayam with effort is Dhyanam; and after the practice of Dhyanam, being in it effortlessly is Samadhi. That is why Dharana, Dhyanam and Samadhi are very close to one another. Patanjali has put these three in the same category. He divided the total 8 sadhanas of Ashtanga Yogam as two groups of 5 Bahiranga Sadhanas and 3 Antaranga Sadhanas.

Some times, this Samadhi, is either due to Poorva Janma Sukrutham, or by Dhyana Abhyasam or due to some other reason. Mind is just still and without any thought. Yoga Sastram talks of many types of Samadhi. Savikalpaka Samadhi, Nirvikalapaka Samadhi, and many other types. Some people think that the experience of Samadhi is 'Moksham'. That is wrong. The experience in Samadhi is not Moksham. It is an experience that is experienced in the Manam. Just as the Manam experiences the Jagrat Anubhavam (Waking state), Swapna Anubhavam (Dream state), Sushupti Anubhavam (experience of deep

sleep), and experience in Dhyanam, so also when the Dhyanam matures the Anubhavam that comes in the Manam is Samadhi.

When the Manam goes to Samadhi and when it returns, the Manam would be in the same manner as it was before it went into Samadhi. There will be no change at all. If after thinking of a Vishayam if we go to Samadhi and come back, the same Vishaya thought will be there.

Sri Ramakrisha used to give an example. A person wanted to eat ‘Vada’ before he went for Dhyanam. He did Dhyanam and went into Samadhi. After a long period, when he returned from Dhyanam, he enquired as to where the 'Vada' was. The meaning is that with whatever state of maturity we go into Samadhi, we return to the same state of maturity. It is like the sleep. Sleep comes due to Prarabdam. Samadhi comes due to Purushartham. That is all the difference.

There is no new knowledge (arivu, அறிவு) in Samadhi, but new experience is there. Such Samadhi is talked to be of many types. We should not do anything for the experience of Samadhi. In Samadhi experience, there is extra happinesss. If one feels, "I want to experience it", or if one expects such happiness, it is said to be an obstacle for Moksham. It is referred to

as Rasaaswaadam. Thus Dhyana Sukham that comes in Samadhi is also not the Lakshyam for us.

There is a Jnanam in the Dhyanam. The Anandam that comes from that Jnanam is Moksham. That Jnanam will not go away from us. Dhyanam is a frame of mind. That will keep changing. The very nature of mind is that it will not be of the same manner. If a person says that for the last two years my mind of the same nature, it means that there is some problem with that mind. Mind cannot of the same type and it should not be such. Fluctuations will be there in it. If the mind is of the same type, it means it has reached a "Mantha" state. It should not be like that.

Samadhi is the Paripakam (culmination) of Dhyanam. It is the success of Dhyanam. In that stage, the difference between Dhyanam and Samadhi is this. While doing Dhyanam, there will be an awareness that "I am doing Dhyanam". If Dhyanam becomes Paripakam (or matures) and becomes Samadhi, there wil be no awarenss or thought that "I am doing Dhyanam". Dhyanam would be happening. But even the thought that "I am doing dhyanam", "in which place am I?", the surroundings will not be known at all.

It is like the children seeing cricket game on the TV. They forget the world itself. They know the ball and the batsman that is all. Everything else will be forgotten. Thus, in Samadhi one will be submerged in that Vishayam itself. That is, Dhyanam's Paripaka state. Thus, between Dhyanam and Samadhi there is no big difference.

In the case of an Ajnani, in Samadhi he will be in whatever Vishayam he has chosen as Lakshyam. A Jnani will be in the Vishayam "I am Brahman". He will not even think that "I am as Brahman". He will as Brahman. This is Samadhi. He has done and completed the practice of Dhyanam well.

Here Sri Sankara says ***"nirvikarataya vrityaa"*** –it means without having "Abrahma Vritti". Vikara Vritti means different types of changing Vritti. Nirvikaram means not having a change. He has only "Aham Brahma Vritti". He will not have unwanted Vrittis, as this is the advanced stage of Dhyanam. In "Nirvikara Vritti" there is no Vishyam for that Vritti? What is the object for that Vritti or thought? ***"Brahma akarataya punaha"*** it is called ***"Brahma aakara vritti"***. "aakaram" means form. "Brahma aakaram" means a Vritti having Brahman as the Vishayam. Having Brahman as Vishayam does not means that he is seeing Brahman as an object outside him. It is the

thought, ***"I am Brahman",*** ('naan Brahman enra oru ennam', **நான் ப்ரஹ்மன் என்ற எண்ணம்**).

The subject for that Vritti is Brahman. How has he understood that Brahman, he has understood it as himself, as Atma. ***"Brahma aakaarataya vrityaa",*** being with such a thought.

This is the same Lakshanam as for Dhyanam. In Dhyanam other Vishayams come and go. Here, in Samadhi other Vishayams do not come. Then, ***'vritti vismaranam samyak'*** –means ***"vritti"s,*** thoughts such as "I am the Dhyaata – I am the one who is doing Dhyanam", "this is the Vishayam for Dhyanam", "now I am doing Dhyanam" are ***"vismaranam samyak"***, they are forgotten well. All these dualities are forgotten. That is Samadhi. ***"Jnana samjnakaha"*** – that which has the name of Jnanam is Samadhi.

The Samadhi mentioned by Patanjali is different. In the Sadhana of Samadhi given by Sri Sankara "Jnanam is Samadhi". That Jnanam is unhindered Jnanam, being without hindrance or obstacles. Who is the enemy or obstacle for this Jnanam. We ourselves only. Our Anatma thoughts are the enemy.

Without opposing ourselves, being with Jnanam is Jnana nishta. Being wih that Jnanam is Samadhi. The meaning given by Sri Sankara is ***"Samadhi = Jnanam"***. This is the final. For him Samadhi is Jnanam only. He is with that Jnanam, in his thought only Brahman is there. Other Vishayams do not come and trouble him. He does not have even the thought that he is doing Dhyanam.

With this all the 15 Angams of Nididdhyasanam are completed. What has Sri Sankara done? He took the names of whatever Sadhanas are normally to be followed by a Sadhaka as given in Yoga Sastra.

A Sadhaka in the beginning stages is required to discipline his Manam. Thus discipling the Manam and acquiring good values, then if he engages in Vedantha Vicharam, the Vicharam would give him the Jnanam. Without discipling the mind if we do Vicharam, such Vicharam like 'Pustaka Jnanam" (bookish knowledge) would not give us any behefit. If a person reads 'Tirukkural' when he is a child, what will he understand? That knowledge would help the child to pass the examination, it would not help for his life.

Vedantha Jnanam is also like that only. One has to study with the maturity that is necessary. Therefore Patanjali has given many

Sadhanas, such as Yama, Niyamam, etc. for a Sadhaka who in the beginning stages. The Sadhanas given by Patanjali (such as Yama, Niyama, Dharana, Dhyanam) have a set of meanings.

A person has already done and completed the Sadhanas as given by Patanjali. And he has obtained the Jnanam by Vicharam. Now, and for the sake of Jnana Nishta he is doing the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam. This Sadhaka is in the last stage.

All those Sadhanas as given in Yoga Sastra have already been followed by the Nididhyasaka. If so, what is the Sadhana at this stage for the Nididhyasaka?

Here Sri Sankara recommends Sadhanas which have which have entirely different meaning as so far explained. For example, disciplining of the Indriyas (senses) (Indriya Kattupadu, இந்திரிய கட்டுபாடு) in the initial stages of Sadhana meant "seeing certain objects and not seeing certain other objects". But for this Atma Jnani there is no such Niyamam or rule that he should not see certain things. "What all he sees, he should see them as Iswara or as himself (Atma)".

Sri Sankara gives new Artham/ descriptions for the Sadhanas. These meanings

or descriptions cannot be seen anywhere else. These are the defintions given by him. The reason is this. When we do some Sadhana (means) we would attain the Sadhyam (Goal) of that Sadhana. Then we would develop an attachment to that Sadhana.

If a sixth standard student gets attachment to the 6th class teacher, and refuses to go to the 7th standard what are we to do? The role of the teacher is to lift the student to the next class. His role is over with that.

We should not get attachment (patru, பற்று) to the Sadhana. Our Lakshyam is the Sadhyam. Sometimes by repeatedly and mechanically handling the Sadhana we get a happy feeling and we would not give up the Sadhana. Then, we have to change the Sadhana.

For example, there is the Sadhana of Yatra (pilgrimage). It is a very importanct Sadhana. In Yatra we go to many places, go all over the world. If we keep doing this till the end, what will happen? Some people after they are past 70 years of age, get the desire to go to Kailasam. And there are some people also to take them, with the thought that let them come and if they survive let them return. Such desires should come in their younger ages.

They go and give trouble to all the others who accompany them. Such desires should come at some stage and should go. At this advanced age, one has to stay put in the house and say ‘Rama, Rama’, without giving trouble to any one. But many do not get this ‘Jnanodayam’. "I have wandered in all unwanted places, at least now let me stay in one good place".

Thus the Sadhanas need to be changed. The "Tatparyam" of what we have studied here is that, at some initial stages, we would have pursued some Sadhanas such as Damaha, Samaha, etc. When we get some maturity, we have to refine and change the Sadhana. So Sri Sankara advises, with previous Vasana, do not keep on doing the Sadhanas that Patanajali has advised. Change your Sadhanas in this manner.

But he is going to advise later that one should not come to these Sadhanas right in the beginning. One should not think "Why should I do what Patanjali has advised, let me proceed to these Vedantha Tri Panchanga Sadhanas as listed herein". Sri Sankara is going to give this warning herein. After doing the Patanjali's Sadhanas, and when one comes to the stage of Nididhyasanam, such Nididhyasaka should do these Sadhanas as explained.

With this, the Sadhanas are completed. In the next Sloka, a Sandeham is considered and its reply is given.

Duration of Nididhyasana

"Imam cha akrithrima anandam
thaavath sadhu samabhyaseth
vasyo yaavath kshanaath pumsaha
prayukthaha san bhaveth svayam"
.. Sl.125

"Nididhyasaka should practice the
Sadhana of Nididhyasanam till such time
When Jnanam comes into action
Spontaneously,even before appearance of
Samsara Vritti"

A question could arise, "How long should a person perform the Sadhana of Nididhyasana?". The Sandeham (doubt or question) and its reply are gven here.

This question is relative. Suppose a person asks us, "How many Idlis should I eat?" What would we reply? We would say, "Eat as many idlis till your hunger gets appeased". That is the right answer.

Thus from one angle this question is unnecessary. Yet people will ask this question. Often when a Vedantha class or Bhagawad Gita

class is commenced, the first question that is asked by many is, "When will the course be completed"? Will it be over in a short time or will it take a long time? If we tell them that it will take 8 years, they will say we cannot attend for 8 long years and will not come to the class. We have to tell it will be completed in a short time. The meaning for the world "short" is relative, one can give any meaning to it.

A person would say I have only put a little spice in the dish. They will say I have just put only 8 chilllis, we put normally 12. Thus the words little, early, quickly, in a short time etc., are relative. If you approach a politician for some work, he will say ‘proper action will be taken soon’. One can interpret it in any manner.

Thus, "How long should I do Nididhyasana?", is a peculiar type of question. Sri Sankara gives a beautiful and proper reply here.

"vasyaha" = Sadhakaha , Nididhyasaka, (one who has disciplined everything, all his Anatma); ***"prayuktaha san"***= when he brings the Jnanam that he has into action, or when he takes effort to bring the Jnanam that he has to action, when he implements (executes) the Jnanam that he has got, he is bringing out this knowledge.

Suppose some one scolds him. He gets anger immediately. Or he sees that another person has an object that he does not have and feels jealousy. Or he gets a thought that gives sorrow to him. Immediately he tries to bring out this Jnanam or the Jnana phalam "I am Poornaha" (I am full); "all the objects in this world are susceptible to destruction". He attempts to implement such knowledge or Phalam of knowledge.

"pumsaha" to that Sadhaka, ***"kshanat swayam bhaveth"*** spontaneously, even before the Samasara Vritti appears and gives sorrow to him, even as he realizes that Samasara Vritti is coming, this Jnana Vritti ***"swayam bhavet"*** = this Jnana Vritti comes on its own and protects him, he gets the Phalam.

Even as Samsara Vritti appears, even before it gives sorrow to us, when we attempt to implement this Jnana Vritti, if the Jnana Vritti appears and gives us the Phalam, ***"taavat"*** = till such time.

This is called spontaneity. Without effort on our side, even as Samsara Vritti comes, inside action is taking place. When you switch on the computer, it will do some actions internally and would display a sign ‘Welcome'. We are unaware of the process that it is doing.

Thus inside us the process is already is done. And the Atma Jnana Vritti comes like the ‘Welcome’ sign. We would not know what process has happened inside.

In a similar manner, the old Vasana has come, we have not yet felt it. Even before we feel the old Vasana, if this Jnanam comes out and gives Prayojanam, ***"taavat"*** till such time Nididhyasanam should be done. "Till this Jnanam gives Phalam spontaneously, Nididhyasanam should be done".

Sri Sankara uses the word ***"imam akritrima aanandam"*** to denote the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam. Nididhyasanam is ***"akritrima aanandam"***. That is Nididhyasanam ***"saadhu sam abhyaset"*** = Nididhyasanam should be practiced continuously and well.

"kritrima" means artificial, what is created or done. ***"Akritrimam"*** means ‘what is not created’ or 'what is natural'. We make an artificial rose like the original. We can call it "Kritrimam Pushpam", artificially made flower/ rose.

"***akritrima aanandam***" means natural Santhosham, the Anada Swaroopam that comes without association with any object and without creation. Happiness that is borrowed

from outside is artificial, and happiness that has come from ourselves, naturally is "akritrimam". Nididhyasanam gives such natural happiness, Anandam. Happiness that is not borrowed from outside, is unconditional happiness. The Nididhyasanam that gives such happiness, Nididhyasaka has to continue till such time.

"Tavat sadhu sam abhyaset", till such time Nididhyasaka should continue to do Abhyasam/ practice of Nididhyasanam. He should practice the Nididhyasanam well and continuously till such time. How long? Line 2 states this. ***"yavat vasyha"*** till such time when the Sadhaka ***"prayuktaha san"*** = brings the Jnanam that he has acquired to implementation or when he uses the Jnanam.

For example, some one uses insulting words to us. Anger rises in us immediately, or a sense of hatred comes. We use this Jnanam at that time. "He is speaking due to ignorance"; "He is insulting my Anatma only"; "My Atma and his Atma are one and same only"; "All vyavaharams / transactions take place in the Anatma only".

When the Nididhyasaka attempts to bring such knowledge to implementation, "***kshanat pumsaha swayam bhavet",*** kshanat means instantaneously / immediately, before Samsara Roopa Vritti forms and before it gives us

sorrow, ***"Swayam Bhavet"*** means when this Jnanam gives us the Phalam immediately. This Jnanam should be in our command. If we call it, it should come and if we do not call it, it should remain dormant or silent.

When we are sleepiig there is no need for Atma Jnanam. Nor is there a requirement for Atma Ajnanam. When it is needed ***"shanaat swayam bhavet"***, if the Jnanam comes and gives its Phalam, till such time Nididhyasnam should be done. We normally see that Jnanam would not come just when we need it. When it is not required, it would come and stay without use. But when we need it, we forget at that instant. At other times, when we don’t need it, we would be sitting with this knowledge.

Some Saapams or curses are like that. For example, Karna was given a Saapam that he would not remember certain 'Astras' when he needed them. What is the use in remembering when we do not need them? The real loss of a thing is losing it when we really need it. Need and the time are important. The definition of friendship itself is this. "A friend in need is friend indeed". One who helps us at the time of need is our friend. We cannot call one a friend if he helps when help is not needed. True friendship and, true relationship are those which are helpful when help is needed. At the time of need, it should be given.

Thus this knowledge should give phalam to us when phalam is needed. Till such time when the knowledge gives instaneous phalam, ‘samabhyaset’ one should practice or do nd. That is, till the Jnanam becomes Jnananishtaa, he should do nd. Till we get a state of mind which has no nibanadana or conditions. If you ask some people, "Have you understood Vedanta they woud say, we have understood. If we ask them are you happy, then only the comma starts. ‘I have understood, but …’". It should be ‘I have understood. I am happy’ beyond that there is nothing. Till then nd should be done.

There is a stage when we do not have the Jnanam and face Kashtam, Samsaram, or difficulties. But at some stage we will have the complete knowledge. Yet that knowledge is not of use or benefit to us.

"prayuktaha san" means when we attempt to use or implement the Jnanam, Jnana Vritti should come by itself. There should be no delay. It should come and give Phalam, whenever there is is a requirement. When there is no need, the Jnana Vritti can be just quiet.

That is why the sleep of an Ajnani and of a Jnani are the same. There is no difference. The Sukham that a Jnani gets in his sleep, is the same as what the Ajnani gets. For both, there

is no requirement of Jnanam at that time. Jnani’s Jnanam would just be dormant and quiet. So also the Ajnani’s Ajnanam would be quiet and dormant, that is why he is also happy at that time. His Moham, Krodham, etc., are also quiet and not working. But upon waking up, Ajnani behaves with Ajnanam at every step. And Jnani is natural with his Jnanam as Swabhavam. Till then Nididhyasaka has to do Nididhyasanam.

From Sl.100 till Sl 124, the 15 Sadhanas were described. Sl. 125 explained the duration for how long the Nididhyasanam should be done. Next sloka gives the Phalam of Nididhyasanam. A person who has done and completed the Nididhyasanam, his state is described.

How is the Nididhyasaka now?

State of Siddha

“Thathaha sadhana nirmukthaha
siddho bhavathi yogiraat
Thath swaroopam na chaithasya
vishayo manaso giraam”   .. Sl.126

"The great Yogi who has completed Nididhyasana, has become a Siddha and free from Sadhanas. Such Siddha's nature can't be described by words or under-

stood by the mind"

What is the state of the person who has done and completed the Nididhyasana? We refer to a person who is doing the Nididhyasana as Nididhyasaka. Such Sadhaka has commited and dedicated his entire life for the sake of Sadhana alone. Sri Sankara states here that he now becomes free from all Sadhanas. Earlier, he was bound by many different things. Then, as a Sadhaka he was bound by the Sadhanas.

Those who want to earn money will say that they do not have time to be able to do this or that work. Even those who do not want to earn money, but instead want to get Moksham, if we ask them if they have time, they too will say that they do not have time. The reason is that they have also another type of Sadhana. Thus, none has the leisure for being free. Yama Dharma Raja says thus only in Katha Upanishad. Those who have opted or selected the Lakshyam of either Sreyas (Welfare) or Preyas (Pleasure), they are bound to the corresponding Sadhanas.

Having sought the goal of Moksham, we are bound to the corresponding Sadhanas. That is why whatever comes as hindrance or obstacle to that Sadhana, becomes a problem or difficulty for us. It gives us sorrow that there is an obstacle to Moksham. So also, one who

seeks Bhogam is bound to the Sadhana that corresponds to it. Thus, "Sadhaka is bound to the Sadhana". ***"Sadhanena bandhaha Sadhakaha"***. That is why we have to tie ourselves up with the Sadhana. It is also a type of bondage.

On this account we should not say, that is why I am not doing any Sadhana! We are bound to the Sadhana for the sake of the Lakshyam of Moksham, so that we are released from the other types of bondage. There will be certain disturbance or difficulty therefore. We are not yet a Mukta, free person then.

Then, who is a Mukta or free person? It is one who has become free from Sadhana. People who have not yet started any Sadhana, those who have not done any Sadhana would also be in such a state only. They are free from Sadhana but they are bound by other things, namely Samsaram. Thus those who have not commenced any Sadhana are bound by Samsaram.

When can a person say that he is free from school? A person who has not gone to school at all can say this. So can a person who has completed the schooling.

Here the person has gone through the Sadhanas and has trancended them. What is

the Phalam that is stated here? "There is no further Sadhana for him". That is the reason why one should not attempt to follow the Sadhana habits or practice of a fully mature Jnani (Jnana Nishta or Jeevan Mukta). It would become a problem for us. Such a person has no Sadhana at all.

A person went and saw Sri Ramana Maharshi. He saw that the latter was simply sitting in the bed, stretching his legs. It was not an ordinary bed, but a very comfortable bed. This would appear very appealing that we could also do like that. What would happen if we attempt to follow this Sadhana! We should not follow this. After many years of Tapas and Sadhana, Ramana Maharshi came to that condition. It is important to know what one should follow at which stage.

If we have to follow Sri Ramana Maharshi, we should follow the Tapas and Sadhanas that he practiced in the beginning stages. That is what we should follow. We should not see his state of experiencing the Phalam of Tapas and follow that. This is very important.

Many Sishyas do not know this. They see their Guru in his final stage, and this could become a problem. They see that many people come to pay respects to the Guru, he goes in a big car etc. Immediately the Sishya may tend

to think that he should also become like that, I should also perhaps buy a car like this. I should also have people around me like this. We should understand that whatever Guru did when he was as a Sishya, that is the Sadhana for us.

So here Sri Sankara states the Phalam thus: ***"tatha sadhana nirmuktaha"*** –One who has done and completed the Nididhyasana, becomes free from Sadhana. He has no Sadhana at all. Certain things become his Swabhavam. He need not do Dhyanam, for his Manam itself is in Dhyanam. He need not do Indriya discipline, for whatever he sees, he sees as Brahma Swaroopam. So, what is there for him to discipline?

"sadhana nirmuktaha" means he does not have any Sadhana to be performed. What should we call him now? We called him Sadhaka earlier. He is now "Siddhaha", which means one who has attained the Sadhyam (Lakshyam, or goal). He becomes Siddhaha, Muktaha. He gets Mukti, freedom from Sadhana.

Before becoming a Siddha, in the last stage how was he? He was ***"Yogiraat"*** ("raat" means Raja) – Nididhyasaka. There are many Yogas, among those Yogas he was as a Raja. He is one who has followed the 15 Sadhanas as

stated by Sri Sankara. One who was as a king among Yogis, now he has become a Siddha.

There is no Sadhana for him now. We may wonder, how will his Manam be? How will he see this world? We would like to understand. If I should understand the Manam of Jnani 100 %, then there is only one way. What is that way? We have to become a Jnani. As long as we are Ajnanis we cannot undersstand the Manam of a Jnani. As we are Ajnani, our understanding would depend on the knowledge that we have.

We cannot understand the Jnani. All of us, without understanding ourselves, wish to understand others. Without knowing how far we have understood ourselves, our effort is always to understand others. Judgement of others, what others need, we are thinking about that only.

Our next question therefore is, can we understand the Manam of Jnani? What is his vision? How does he see this world? (avar eppadi porul paduththugiraar, **அவர் எப்படி பொருள் படுத்துகிறார்?**). Can we understand all this?

Some people go to a Jnani and say, “please do not get angry with me, if I ask a

question”. Or “will you misunderstand me, if I ask a question?” With whom is he going to get angry? The reason why we put such preamble is that, we are unable to understand him. Whatever we may do, or whatever questions we might ask he will not get angry.

This is what Sri Sankara states in line 2. No one can undertstand the mind of Jnani. We have seen earlier. ‘We cannot describe/ or explain Brahman’. ‘We cannot describe/ explain this world’. Here Sri Sankara states, "So also Jnani’s mind cannot be described/explained". He cannot explain his mind to others.

All our struggle is to make others understand our mind. Jnani has no such struggle, for he has understood that "No one can understand me". So he has no struggle. In our struggle we have concluded that we can make others understand us. But the big secret is that "I cannot be understood by any one". And Jnani also knows that "He cannot make others understand him". Others cannot understand him. As he has understood this, he will not attempt to prove himself.

In life, on many occasions our behaviour is to prove ourselves. "Why should we prove ourselves?" Our struggle is in that only. Others are not going to be able to understand any way. Even if they understand, they will behave

as if they have not understood us. None will understand us.

Jnani has understood, "I and my Manam cannot be understood by any one. If some one understands, he and I are not different. Or only Iswara can understand me. Therefore I will not make an effort to make others understand me".

If we give up such an effort, that is the real or true relaxation. "No one need understand me, whatever they may think of me think in whatever manner. That is not my problem. I am happy whatever others may think". If such a maturity comes to us, that is Moksham.

Sri Sankara explains this beautiful state of the Jnani, how he will be in a normal fashion in the world. He will not show any extra or abnormality at all. Only a person without much ability will be dancing in this world. A pot filled fully with water would not spill. Jnani will behave normally as always, in a balanced (***'sama'***) manner. But the knowledge and maturity which are in his deeper mind cannot be described or understood by anyone. This is stated in the second line by Sri Sankara.

"na etasya" - this Jnani's; ***"tat swa-roopam"*** this Moksha (his nature of being a Siddha or truth). ***"tat swaroopam"*** means

"his having completed the Sadhana and having become free from the Sadhana also, that nature".

At one point of time he has done extensive Tapas. And now he is as Siddha. He has given up all the Sadhanas. Thus, his current nature of being a Siddha, ***"manasaha giram na vishayaha"*** -"it is not a Vishayam for words (speech) and Manam for others". It will not be an object for understanding. It cannot be understood. Others' mind cannot understand his Manam. Others' words cannot also explain this. It cannot be understood.

Then if we have to understand a Jnani's mind, it is possible only if we make our mind like Jnani's.

For example, the extent to which a person's hunger is appeased cannot be explained by another person. But some people conclude, two idlis are enough for you. No other person can conclude how much we want. Just as we alone can experience the extent to which our hunger is appeased, so also no one can be aware. The most experienced doctor will have to ask us if our hunger is fulfilled. None other than us can find out. So also no one can understand a Jnani's mind. This is a value. This is indeed Moksham. It is a Poornatwam

(Niraivu, நிறைவு) that we get. This we should understand.

With this, the description of Sadhanas is completed. In the next 2 Slokas the obstacles to the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam are discussed. When we do the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam, what obstacles do we get? Patanjali also speaks about these. Generally in Yoga Sastram four obstacles will be discussed. But Sri Sankara discusses 8 obstacles here, including 4 more.

We were happy that only 4 obstacles were there, but Sri Sankara adds 4 more. It is not that these obstacles are applicable only to the Nididhyasanam that is discussed here. Indeed they are applicable to all Sadhanas.

For Dhyanam or to our travel to the Lakshyam of Moksham, what are all the obstacles that will come to us?

When we commence any good task, the first thing that comes is an obstacle. Only after that would any encouragement come. But, if we commence a negative task, the first thing we will get is support or encouragement. After that only an obstruction might come or not.

Thus Sri Sankara lists 8 obstacles that would come for Dhyanam or to proceed on the

path to the goal of Moksham. Stating these obstacles, he wants us to remove /overcome them. Sri Sankara has has not given the Upayams to overcome these.

OBSTACLES TO SADHANAS

Sadhakas (Spiritual aspirants) experience obstacles (Vighnaas) when they perform Sadhanas (spiritual practices) in pursuit of their goal of Moksha (Liberation). These Sadhanas could be Nididhyasanam (Vedantic meditation) or other Sadhanas [such as other types of Dhyanam (Meditation); transformation of character comprising the giving up of negative qualities and the cultivation of good values; or Tapas (Austerities); and even peformance of good deeds].

In 'Aparoksha Anubhuti' (Sl.127-128) Sri Sankara Bhagawatpaatha advises that such obstacles would definitely, naturally, and unexpectedly come irrespective of our choice, and that they would be forceful (hard to surmount).

PRIME OBSTACLES

Sri Sankara Bhagawatpatha lists eight prime obstacles (Vighnaani) to spiritual

Sadhanas and suggests the remedial measures (Upayani) to overcome those obstacles.

These obstacles are

i. Lack of persistence (Anusandhana Rahityam)
ii. Laziness (Aalasyam)
iii. Inclination to pleasures (Bhoga Lalasam)
iv. Sleep (Layaha / Nidra)
v. Lack of clarity in the Sadhana (Karya- Akarya Avivekam)
vi. Distraction (Vikshepaha)
vii. Attachment to the Sadhana (Rasa aswathaha)
viii. Depression (Soonyatha)

Sri Sankara advises that those who desire to attain their goal (Lakshyam), should not stop their ‘Sadhanas’, when confronted by the obstacles. Such obstacles would arise. It is only natural.

May the obstacles arise! But, the Sadhaka (Aspirant) should not stop the Sadhanas, instead he should surmount them using the Upayams (Remedies) advised. The Sadhaka should pursue the Sadhanas till the goal is attained and the benefits therefor are realised.

i. LACK OF PERSISTENCE (Anusandhana Rahityam)

Lack of persistence (***Anusandhana Rahityam***) is the first obstacle that one could experience. "***It means giving up of the Sadhana, giving up of what we are doing without continuity***".

When a person commences any Sadhana, it should be pursued continuously for a sufficiently long period of time. Only when the Sadhana is pursued for some period could one attain the benefits of the Sadhana.

But, what one does often is to commence a Sadhanaa with great enthusiasm. The speed or tempo in that Sadhana will be there for sometime. Later the tempo slowly reduces.

For example, we make a resolution on New Year's day with fanfare that we would commence the pursuit of a certain good value from that day onwards. But we see that our enthusiasm wanes gradually and even before the end of January, the pursuit of the value is given up. Our Sadhana continues only for a short time and is stopped.

Anusandhana Rahityam means not having continuity in the Sadhana that we have taken up, or giving up of the Sadhana.

For most Sadhanas, such as Yoga Asanas continuity and persistence are most important. A person claimed that he had been performing Yoga Aasanas for 20 years, but did not get much benefit! How was he doing? He would do Asanas for one month and would give up for the next 3 months. What is the use of doing in such a practice, even if it is done for 20 years? Instead, if he had practiced Yoga Asanas even for just one year but with continuity, he would have benefitted.

Persistence of the Sadhana is most important. If we have allotted a certain time for our Dhyanam, at that allotted time whether we do Dhyanam or not, even if we practice sitting still with closed eyes for 15 minutes, it indeed is a Sadhana.

In the same manner, whatever Sadhana we take up, continuity is very important. Giving up such continuity or lack of persistence is the first obstacle.

There could be many reasons for the lack of persistence. Our desire in the goal could be less. Or the task could be beyond our ability. Or we might not have the appropriate mental state.

The most important reason is not having the strength to bear the pain or difficulty involved in the performance of the Sadhana.

We should understand that the performance of any Sadhana, but for a few exceptions, is painful. Taking food to appease our hunger is a Sadhana. It is not a painful Sadhana. Similarly, the Sadhana of Sravanam (Listening to Vedanta Sastra) by a Sadhaka by itself is not painful. However, the associated tasks of allocation of time, travel etc., involve pain/ stress. In general, spiritual Sadhanas are associated with pain.

Not having the strength to face the pain associated with the Sadhana is the one of the reasons for the Lack of persistence (or Anusandhana Rahityam).

The second reason for 'Lack of persistence' (Anusandhana Rahityam) is that we do not have '***Theevra Ichcha***' (Intense desire) in the goal.

If a Nididhyasaka (aspirant doing NidiDhyasanam / Vedantic Meditation), does not have intense desire (Mumukshutwam) in attaining the goal of Moksham (Liberation), if he has not taken a determined decision (Sankalpam) for it, he would do the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam in a rather casual manner. He

would have commenced the Sadhana but would not be pursuing it with persistence, due to lack of 'Teevra Ichcha' (Intense desire) and lack of determination.

There could be many other reasons too, such as, we might not be having support, those who are around us could be against us. Due to any of these reasons one has the habit of giving up the Sadhana in the middle.

Therefore, one must take a Sadhana for a minor, smaller issue. It should be practiced and completed. This success helps one to cultivate the habit of completing the Sadhana. Thereupon, even when a Sadhana for major issue is taken up, it could be pursued and completed.

Some people commence a task, and even before completing it move on to another, and another. They are called ***'Aarambha Sooraha'*** (great starters). They are thus developing the habit of giving up whatever Saadhanaas they might take up.

If we undertake a task, even if it were a minor tak, we should pursue and complete it. Thereafter, when we take up major tasks (Sadhanas), we would complete them.

Also, several tasks should not be taken up together.

Whatever we take up, we should complete it. This is an important Vratam (Resolve). If we are unable to do it, we should not commence it in the first place. Either we should not undertake the task, or if we have taken it up, we should pursue it to its end. It should not be given up in the middle.

Non-serious pursuit (Anusandhana Rahityam) of one's Sadhana is a human's major flaw. It should be avoided.

ii. LAZINESS (Aalasyam)

The second obstacle to Sadhana is 'Laziness' (***Aalasyam***). We are all aware of this. Due to this also we give up many of our Sadhanas. Due to this quality of laziness, we might give up our Sadhanas such as Dhyanam.

A psychologist states that "Laziness is the original sin of mankind". It is a kind of character or cultivated habit of postponement of what has to be done to a later time ("Let us do it later") and procrastination ("Let us do it slowly, at our own pace"), and not being brisk and timely.

We should introspect and find out all the reasons for such laziness and remove them.

There could be several reasons for laziness. One has to commence from the food. When we overeat, it results in laziness. (A half full stomach is recommended for several Sadhanas such as Dhyanam). (pasiththiru, பசித்திரு). Where 4 idlis are enough to appease the hunger, if one eats 8 idlies laziness would inevitably result. In the case of food, commencing with the quantum of food and quality, there could be other reasons such as eating stale food. These should be found out and avided.

We should find out the aspect in respect of which we are lazy, and the extent to which we are lazy, and remove such causes.

Those who experience laziness are under the predominant influence of "Tamogunam" (Inertia). They should evoke some "Rajogunam" (Activity) to overcome the influence of "Tamogunam". When under the influence of "Tamogunam", one should not attempt to proceed directly to a Sadhana (such as Dhyanam, reading a text, etc.) that needs "Satwaguna". If one does so, that Sadhana would tend to help "Tamoguna", it would lead to sleep. At such times, "Tamogunam" is powerful and dominant. The remedy for this is

to take the support of "Rajogunam". One should, take up Sadhanas which are of the nature of activity. One should attempt to be brisk, take some extra responsibility or activity.

iii. ATTACHMENT TO PLEASURES (Bhoga Laalasam)

The third obstacle to Sadhana is "Attachment to Pleasures" ("***Bhoga Laalasam***"). It is the desire to experience or enjoy pleasures, getting attracted to "Bhogam" or pleasures. Due to such attachment, we are unable to pursue our Sadhanas.

For example, a person takes a decision to get up at 6 am. He has the habit of getting up at 8.30 am normally. For him, sleeping for two and half hours from 6 to 8.30 am is like being in heaven. Though he has now decided to get up early, his mind and body are habituated and have attachment to the pleasure of sleeping in that period.

Just like a grocery trader uses his beam balance to weigh his wares, this person compares the difficulty of having to get up at that time with the pleasure of sleeping. He evaluates as to which is better for him. He finds that he is more attached to the pleasure of sleeping than to the benefit obtained by getting

up. And he decides, "It is alright even if I do not wake up, for the sake of the pleasure".

If we were to have the option between doing Dhyanam or eating ‘Vadai’, what would we prefer? If we have "Bhoga Laalasam", we would decide, "Let us eat now and thereafter do Dhyanam". It is the desire, "I should experience pleasures". If such a "Vasana" (desire to experience pleasure) is there, it would disturb the Dhyanam.

Thus, "Bhoga Laalasam" is the mind having attachment or interest in whichever pleasure that has to be forsaken while Sadhana is being performed. On account of this, we give up Dhyanam or such other Sadhanas that we have to perform. The remedy for overcoming this flaw is "Theevra Vairagyam" (Intense Detachment), cultivation of even greater detachment to or disinterest in the sense pleasures.

iv. <u>SLEEP (LAYAHA/ NIDRA)</u>

Sleep is an obstacle to Sadhanas, in particular to Nididhyasanam (and other types of Dhyanam). This is an obstacle mentioned by Maharshi Patanjali as well.

When we commence the Sadhana of Dhyanam, we withdraw all the Karma Indriyas

(Motor organs) and Jnana Indriyas (Sensory Organs) from the external objects. Then, we decide not to think of any thing. Thereby, there is no external disturbance and the mind becomes very calm. This is also a very conducive situation for the mind to go to rest or sleep (Layam).

There is a detailed study as to why this Layam comes. The reason for a person facing the obstacle of sleep is that one has not lived a balanced life. Being awake for long period (having less sleep) or taking excessive food (overeating) or excessive physical work could result in this obstacle of Layaha.

One reason is that we would not have got adequate sleep and the body would not have got the necessary rest. In such a case what would happen is that in Dhyana time or if we wish to do some other Sadhana, we would get yawns. The reason is that at that time "Layam" has manifested. The remedy for this is to get adequate sleep or rest. Sufficient physical exercise should be there.

Another specific reason for Layam is "Adhika Bhojnam" (Overeating). Food intake must be appropriate.

Taking all these precautions, we should take care to avoid Sleep during the Sadhana

period. Also we should choose such time for Dhyanam when we are fresh and are not feeling sleepy. Difficult Sadhanas should be performed when we are alert. The chosen time should not be in direct conflict with the Sadhana. For example, in schools post lunch time of 2 pm is not conducive for study of difficult subjects.

If sleep comes during Dhyanam, the harm is less. But same sleep when it comes when one is say driving a scooter or vehicle, the results are serious. (One could sleep eternally as the result). If a person were to come under the influence of sleep when he is driving, we would realise how powerful an obstacle "Layaha" is. That is the point here. Arjuna had the title "Gudaakesa", one who has control over sleep. "Layaha" (Sleep) would come beyond our control, if we have imbalances in our iving.

Adopting suitable techniques, we should overcome "Layam" (Sleep).

v. CONFUSION ABOUT SADHANA (Tamaha)

The fifth obstacle is "***Karya-Akarya Avivekam***" or Tamaha. Suddenly in respect of something we would get confused, "Should I do this now or should I do that"? It is confusion or not being clear as to what should be done and what should not be done.

In respect of the Sadhana, it is lack of clarity in Sadhana. "Should this Sadhana be done now, or should it be done later?"

For example, should we do walking now and follow it up with Yoga Asanas or should we do Yoga Asanas now and follow it with walking. If such a confusion crops up, we end up doing neither of the Sadhanas. Even if we commence one Sadhana, our mind would be wondering if we should be doing the other Sadhana. And if we commence with the second Sadhana, the mind would be wondering if we should be doing the other Sadhana.

In the case of Dhyanam, should we meditate on this ‘Value’ or that ‘Value’? Should I do ‘Value Meditation’ now or should meditate "Aham Brahma Asmi (I am Brahman)".

Suddenly, one could get either a doubt which is genuine or otherwise. Due to such doubts, one’s Sadhana gets affected.

If there is confusion and vacillation about which Sadhana should be done and which should not be done, there would not be steadiness in the Sadhana. We would not have conviction that this is the Sadhana which should be done now. We would not be performing that Sadhana properly and with full commitment.

If we have commenced a Sadhana, during the Sadhana period our focus should be on that alone. Some people come to Vedanta class and would be wondering if they have taken the right decision. If so, one would not be able to give full attention to the performace of the Sadhana of Sastra Sravanam.

"***Karya-Akarya Avivekam***" (confusion about what is to be done and what is not to be done) is indeed ***"Sadhana- Asadhana Avivekam"*** (confusion about what Sadhana is to be done now and what Sadhana is not to be done now). All are "Sadhanas" only, but our confusion is about the Sadhana that is appropriate for us at this stage.

This obstacle can be overcome through the grace and advice of Guru.

vi. VIKSHEPAHA (Disturbance / Distraction)

The next obstacle to our Sadhana is ***"Vikshepaha"***, which is due to instigation by Rajogunam. It is the effect of "Rajogunam". The mind tends to think unnecessarily, excessively, and in a very fast manner. It is mental "Fast Forwarding". We ourselves know that there is no need for such thinking. Yet, the mind would engage in such thoughts.

If we wish to think about or focus on a particular thing, the Rajogunam makes us to think of things other than that.

Vikshepam is the reason for all the unwanted thoughts that arise during our Dhyanam. Vikshepam is also caused by Lack of Vairagyam, due to our attachment to things.

Remedies to overcome Vikshepam are given in Yoga Sastram and can be obtained therefrom. What should we do to avoid Vikshepam? One should reduce such "Vikshepam" slowly, by reducing the speed and intensity of "Rajogunam". We should reduce our attachment (to people, objects, situations) and increase our "Vairagyam" (sense of detachment).

Vikshepam means flow of uncessary thoughts. Wherever we desire to reduce the flow of thoughts, if thoughts keep flowing it is the case of Vikshepam. Reducing such flow of unnecessary thoughts is the remedy for this obstacle.

vii. ATTACHMENT TO THE SADHANA (*Rasa Aswathanam*)

The seventh obstacle is ***"Rasa Aswathanam".*** "Rasasvadaha" means becoming a slave to a "Satwic mind", or

becoming slave to the happiness experienced in the Sadhana. It is getting attached to the happiness which is experienced during the performance of the Sadhana.

Initially, doing Sadhanas such as 'Japam' or ‘Dhyanam’ involves difficulty. But soon, upon practice it will become a happy and pleasurable experience. The Sadhaka could get addicted to that happiness in the Sadhana and might not go beyond (transcend) that experience.

The reason why we perform the Sadhana of Nididhyasanam is very important. We have acquired Brahma Jnanam (Atma Jnanam/ Self knowledge). Yet, our own past impressions (Samskaras) are functioning as hindrances to our experiencing the benefit of such knowledge (Jnanam). Our own character is the obstacle for our newly acquired knowledge. In order to overcome such character (***"Vipareeta Bhavana"),*** to be able to experience the benefits of the knowledge, we do the Dhyanam of Nididhyasanam.

The nature of Self Knowledge is that ***"Aham Poornaha"*** (***"I am Full"),*** or ***"I am without a sense of lacking",*** or ***"I am Brahman",*** or ***"I am Eternal"*** or ***"I am indestructible",*** etc. When we do Nididhyasanam (Vedantic meditation) to be established in such knowledge, the

performance of such Dhyanam itself would give us happiness.

Sitting in a suitable place, we would make our mind relaxed and calm and practice Dhyanam. The purpose of ‘Relaxation Meditation’ is to relax our mind. Then we proceed further to ‘Jnanam’ and do ‘Dhyanam’ of that ‘Jnanam’ (Self Knowledge). But, what we might do is to be happy with the relaxation that is experienced. We might feel, "I have attained ***‘Tripti’*** (Contentment). This is enough. Nothing further is required" and would give up our ‘Nididhyasanam’. One has to go beyond and higher to such contentment. There would a sense of pleasure in performing such a meditation. This happiness is called Dhyana Sukham, happiness experienced while performing the meditation.

"Rasa Aswaatham" is the mind becoming a slave (becoming addicted) to the calm situation. It is nicely and briefly stated to be ***"Dhanyoham iti buddhihi"***. The mind feeling that it has achieved. Such a feeling should come when what has to be attained finally has indeed been attained, but not before. Even before attaining the goal, if one feels that he has attained it, it is an obstacle to Sadhana.

A Sadhaka might become attached to the calmness and happiness that are obtained in

the process of Nididhyasanam and might miss the bliss that is the result of the Self knowledge. Instead of giving importance to the knowledge, the Sadhaka might stay put with the happiness experienced in the meditation process.

Some spiritual aspirants renounce the world. We could see many such persons in places like Rishikesh. There is happiness in Vairagyam, in not being attached to the pleasures of the world. They would not be having Self knowledge, but they would be Sadhus (good persons), and would be happy and contented. They would bide their times, till the end. The reason for their happiness is called 'Vairagya Sukham', the happiness that is experienced due to being unattached. But, one should not stay put in that alone, we should go beyond.

Thus, one has to give up the happiness obtained in Dhyanam as well. One should do Tyagam of Dhyana Sukham. One should not become entangled with the happiness experience in being in solitude, being in calm environment, and such other Sadhanas.

"Rasa Aswathana" means becoming attached or enslaved by the happiness associated with the performance fof the Sadhana itself. If we get attached to this

happiness our attention will not go to the Self knowledge. If so, after a while we will stay put in this happiness itself.

Many, upon doing Japa (repetition of a Name or Mantra), experience a calm and happy mind, they stay in that Sadhana itself without progressing to "Vicharam" (self inquiry). We can see many such people. The reason is that the very performance of a discipline has certain happiness associated with it and some people stop with that discipline without proceeding further.

Some say, I am doing Dhyanam and other Sadhanas properly, this itself is very pleasing, why do I need Vedantha Sastram or Self Knowledge, any further. This is enough by itself. Some people who have done some Tapas, would experience the happiness given by that Tapas and the Tapas itself could become an obstacle to their further progress.

If any one states that he has not experienced any happiness in Sadhana, it means that he has not done any Sadhana at all. If one were to say that he has not experienced the obstacle of "Rasa Aswathana", it means that he has not done Dhyanam to that extent. This is not to say that for fear of "Rasa Aswathana", one should not perform the Sadhana. One should do the Sadhana and at

the same time should have Vairagyam (detachment) to the peace and happiness which are experienced in the Sadhana.

This obstacle comes to many Sadhanas. Upon progressing a little with the Sadhana one gets to think that one has attained the benefit, so why should I continue the Sadhana, what is there to perform any further, and so on. We should not think like this, we have to progress further.

We should not conclude that we have become a "Siddha" (one who has attained the goal, "Siddhi"). We have to remember that we are still a "Sadhaka" (an aspirant) and should continue our "Sadhana", till we actually have reached the goal.

Others who are nearby, who have seen us study Bhagawad Gita for some 5 or 10 years, might think and conlcude that we are "Siddha" or "Muktapurusha" (liberated soul). They cannot know our mental state truly and are talking out of ignorance. They are making a mistake. If only they really know our internal state, they would not have concluded thus. If one is albe to see our mind as in a mirror, they might conclude that they themselves are far better than us.

Believing other's words or if we ourselves conclude that we have attained the goal, it is due to "Rasa Aswatham". Validating the progress that we have achieved is alright and a different matter. At the same time we should not conclude that we have reached the goal.

Therfore, Sri Sankara Bhagawathpatha states elsewhere that if the mind is calm in Dhyanam, we should have Vairagyam (be not attached) to that calmness also. We should be able to say that "I do not desire this calmness also. I should progress to the next stage". That is, we should have Vairagyam (sense of detachment) to the happiness that is in the Nididhyasanam or Sadhana and transcend.

viii. DEPRESSION (*Sunyatha)*

The eighth and last obstacle stated by Sri Sankara Bhagawathpada is "Sunyatha" (Depression). Patanjali Maharshi calls this as Kashayam. At times, our mind will experience a kind of depression or fatigue. This is called Sunyatha. If we are asked as to the reasons for this, we would not know any.

The likes and dislikes (***"Raga- Dwesha"***) that are in our mind give us a type of depression or mental fatigue. We will be unaware of the reasons for such a condition. We will find that on certain days we will feel very enthusiastic. If one enquires the reason for

such enthusiasm we will not be able to explain. At other times we feel dull, we would even complain about the external climate not being alright. Indeed, our inner climate is not alright.

The reason given in the Yoga Sastram for this is as follows. Some Vasanas which are in us, if they are not able to manifest or express themselves and if they are also unable to be dormant, the mind would experience such depression of fatigue.

We can understand such condition from the example of a person who has eaten 15 Parotas. He then experiences a condition of not being able to digest them, nor is he able to send it out. He would say that he would feel better, if he vomits, but that also does not come. It is a kind of dull state. The digestive mechanism finds that it is overloaded and will struggle. The body will not eject the food nor can it digest it and experiences a dilemma.

Similar stage is experiened by our mind. Normally when the Vasanas (past impressions) come out, they would manifest as desires in our mind and would engage us in action to fulfil such desires. If we are asleep, the Vasanas would be dormant and we would be unaware of this. But, at times some Vasanas would neither manifest nor will they be dormant inside. The mind experiences this dilemma and would not

know what to do. The mind would be unable to express them or supress them. It is a kind of depression or state of dullness that would come to Sadhakas.

If such ***"Sunyatha"*** (or ***"Kashayam"***, Depression) comes, Patanjali gives the remedy of just observing and allowing such state to pass. We should not attempt to apply any remedy for this. At such times, it is enough if we do not add to the load of the mind. What we should do at such times is to just be quiet like a Sakshi (witness), with patience.

In the earlier example, when our stomach is struggling to cope up with the overload, the best remedy is that we do not add further material to it. But, some people feel that they should do something, would take additional material, aggravating the situation. Most often, mere fasting would be adequate. We see that even animals such as dogs, when they are unwell would simply starve.

Kashaayam is similar. If the mind is experiencing Kashayam, we should just be quiet. The Upayam (remedy) for Kashayam is not to take any remedy. It is enough if we are just quiet and patient.

We must stop our Sadhanas such as Dhyanam at that time and should not force

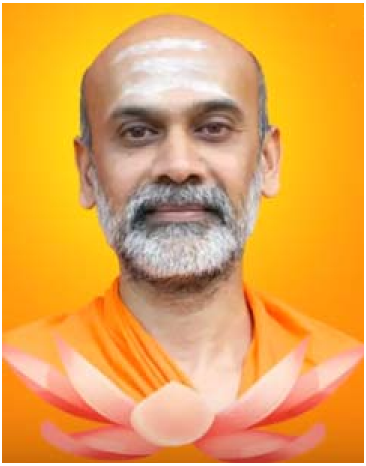
ourselves. We could have some light entertainment such as music or seeing television, at that time. In course of time, Kashayam will go away.

ix. OTHER OBSTACLES

There would be many other obstacles to the Jnani Sadhaka (aspirant who has acquired Brahma Jnanam), in his endeavour to Jnana Nishta (establishment in the Brahma Jnanam). These obstacles should be should be overcome and removed by the Sadhaka slowly and steadily.

Om Tat Sat

Translated from Original Tamil Talks to English by : Dr. B.V.Subrahmanyam



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